

*revised 8/15/11

**AGENDA
ZONING COMMITTEE
OF THE SAINT PAUL PLANNING COMMISSION
Thursday, August 25, 2011 3:30 P.M.
City Council Chambers, Room #300
Third Floor City Hall - Saint Paul, Minnesota**

NOTE: The order in which the items appear on this agenda is not necessarily the order in which they will be heard at the meeting. The Zoning Committee will determine the order of the agenda at the beginning of its meeting.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 11, 2011, ZONING COMMITTEE MINUTES

SITE PLAN REVIEW – List of current applications (Tom Beach, 651-266-9086)

NEW BUSINESS

- 1 11-255-877 Rolando Aguilar et al**
Rezoning from RT1 Two-Family Residential to T2 Traditional Neighborhood
833 York Ave, NE corner of Arcade at York
RT1
Luis Pereira 651-266-6591

- 2 11-260-156 Meridian Industrial Appeal**
Appeal to Planning Commission by Union Park District Council of staff decision made on
July 20, 2011 to approve site plan.
650 Pelham Blvd
I1
Tom Beach 651-266-9086

ADJOURNMENT

ZONING COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Call Patricia James at 266-6639 or Samantha Langer at 266-6550 if you are unable to attend the meeting.

APPLICANT: You or your designated representative must attend this meeting to answer any questions that the committee may have.

August 25, 2011 Zoning Committee Cases

ZONING COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

1. **FILE NAME:** Rolando Aguilar, et. al. **FILE #:** 10-121-038
 2. **APPLICANT:** Rolando Aguilar, North Real Estate LLC, Cesar N Dominguez **HEARING DATE:** Aug. 25, 2011
 3. **TYPE OF APPLICATION:** Rezoning
 4. **LOCATIONS:** 902 Arcade, 908 Arcade, and 833 York Ave, NE Corner at York
 5. **PINS & LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS:** *Area to be rezoned* – portions of PIN 282922320134 and 282922320136, legally described as Lot 16, Blk 1 of William's Rearrangement of Blk 7 and part of Blk 4, Nelson Addition to the City of St. Paul (**908 Arcade and 833 York**, respectively)
 6. **PLANNING DISTRICT:** 5 **EXISTING ZONING:** RT1
 7. **ZONING CODE REFERENCE:** §61.801(b)
 8. **STAFF REPORT DATE:** August 16, 2011 **BY:** Luis Pereira
 9. **DATE RECEIVED:** July 27, 2011 **60-DAY DEADLINE FOR ACTION:** September 25, 2011
-

- A. **PURPOSE:** Rezoning existing and new portions of 908 Arcade Street from RT1 Two Family Residential to T2 Traditional Neighborhood.
- B. **PARCEL SIZES:** *Proposed, post-common boundary adjustment* - 902 Arcade: approximately 4,828 square feet (0.111 acres); 908 Arcade: approximately 6,166 square feet (0.142 acres); and 833 York: approximately 7,060 square feet (0.162 acres).
- C. **EXISTING LAND USES:** Rear yards for commercial and apartment properties at 902 and 908 Arcade St (T2); former western sideyard of residential property at 833 York Ave (RT1)
- D. **SURROUNDING LAND USES:**
 - North: Mixed use retail-residential (T2)
 - South: Seeger's Square shopping center (T2)
 - East: Duplex at 833 York Ave (RT1)
 - West: Single family detached home (T2)
- E. **ZONING CODE CITATION:** §61.801(b) provides for changes to the zoning of property initiated by the property owner.
- F. **HISTORY/DISCUSSION:** Minimal zoning history was found for this property; City records indicate a City approval in 1943 for a parking lot for the Atlas Theatre on Lots 16 and 17 of this block, suggesting a long history of commercial uses. One of the applicants and owner of the Los Gallo's 8 money transfer business at 902 Arcade St – Rolando Aguilar – has owned the commercial and multifamily properties at 902 and 908 Arcade since 2002.

The proposed the lot split and this rezoning are driven by Aguilar's plans for a future parking expansion to the rear of the Los Gallo's and apartment buildings.
- G. **DISTRICT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION:** The Payne Phalen District Five Planning Council had not provided a written recommendation at the time of this staff report.
- H. **FINDINGS:**
 1. One of the applicants, Rolando Aguilar/North Real Estate LLC, seeks to rezone from RT1 to T2 the rear portion of his property at 908 Arcade. In addition, a portion of 833 York Ave (part of Lot 16) is proposed to be transferred to 902 and 908 Arcade via a pending adjustment of common boundary (#11-241-408). This additional area for 908 Arcade (and 902 Arcade, post-boundary adjustment) is also proposed to be rezoned from RT1 to T2. The other applicant, Cesar N Dominguez, is the owner of 833 York Ave.

2. The adjustment of common boundary (lot split) involves three parcels. If the adjustment is approved, western portions of 833 York Ave (Lot 16) will become rear, eastern portions of 902 Arcade St (Lot 13/14) and 908 Arcade St (Lots 13/14/16).
3. The proposed future use of an expanded T2-zoned area to the rear of buildings at 902 Arcade and 908 Arcade is off-street parking. While the existing buildings at 902 Arcade and 908 Arcade will continue to be used for the money transfer business and apartment units (respectively), the owner of these properties (one of the applicants - Rolando Aguilar) has no construction plans for new off-street parking at this time.
4. The proposed zoning is consistent with the way this area has developed. The properties have long been used for a mix of commercial and residential purposes. The proposed T2 zoning allows for the continued use of the property for commercial, mixed use, or residential uses along a diverse commercial corridor, consistent with the way the area has developed.
5. The proposed zoning is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Arcade Street Small Area Plan Summary, approved in 2007, promotes the creation of "parking at the rear of buildings along Arcade Street" by "acquiring parcels behind the commercial frontage, up to 120 feet, and demolishing the buildings on the parcels." It also calls for the installation of "buffers between the parking areas and the adjoining residential areas." The eastern boundary of the portion of 833 York Ave to be conveyed over to 902 and 908 Arcade St is located approximately 120 feet from the commercial frontage of the latter two properties; i.e. a rezoning to T2 is consistent with supporting off-street parking for the mixed commercial uses along Arcade in this location.

In addition, the Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2010, also designates the properties as "Mixed Use Corridor," a future land use category described as "primary thoroughfares through the city that are served by public transit (or could be in the future). Includes areas where two or more of the following uses are or could be located: residential, commercial, retail, office, small scale industry, institutional, and open space. Uses may be within a building or in buildings that are in close proximity."

6. The proposed T2 zoning is compatible with the existing T2 zoning along Arcade Street as well as RM2 and RT1 zoning in place on the mixed residential blocks that intersect with Arcade Street.
7. Court rulings have determined that "spot zoning" is illegal in Minnesota. Minnesota courts have stated that this term *"applies to zoning changes, typically limited to small plots of land, which establish a use classification inconsistent with the surrounding uses and creates an island of nonconforming use within a larger zoned district, and which dramatically reduce the value for uses specified in the zoning ordinance of either the rezoned plot or abutting property."* The proposed rezoning to T2 of three small portions of parcels adjacent to existing T2-zoned commercial and residential property does not establish a use classification that is inconsistent with surrounding uses – a large T2-zoned Seeger Square commercial center, another T2-zoned mixed commercial-residential building, and an existing RT1-zoned duplex property.
8. The petition for rezoning was found to be sufficient on July 27, 2011: 15 parcels eligible; 10 parcels required; 10 parcels signed.

- I. **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Based on the above findings, staff recommends approval of the rezoning of existing and proposed new portions of 908 Arcade St (and proposed new portion of 902 Arcade St) from RT1 Two Family Residential to T2 Traditional Neighborhood.



PETITION TO AMEND THE ZONING CODE

Department of Planning and Economic Development
 Zoning Section
 1400 City Hall Annex
 25 West Fourth Street
 Saint Paul, MN 55102-1634
 (651) 266-6589

zoning office use only
 File # 11-255877
 Fee 1200.00
 Tentative Hearing Date 7-11-11
8-25-11

PD-5

282922320136

APPLICANT

Property Owner See attachment Appendix A 0135
 Address " " " " 0134
 City _____ St. _____ Zip _____ Daytime Phone _____
 Contact Person (if different) _____ Phone _____

PROPERTY LOCATION

Address / Location See attachment Appendix B
 Legal Description " " "
 Current Zoning RT1
 (attach additional sheet if necessary)

TO THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL:

Pursuant to Section 61.800 of the Saint Paul Zoning Ordinance and to Section 462.357(5) of Minnesota Statutes,
Cesar N. Dominguez, owner of land proposed for rezoning, hereby petitions you to
 rezone the above described property from a RT-1 zoning district to a TN2
 zoning district, for the purpose of:

Having enough space to build a parking lot on the future. that

[Signature] member

[Signature] owner

(attach additional sheets if necessary)

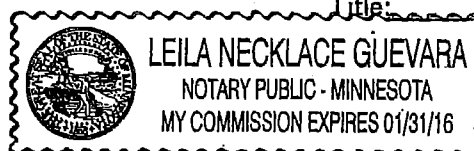
Attachments as required: ☒ Site Plan ☐ Consent Petition ☐ Affidavit

Subscribed and sworn to before me
 this 8 day
 of June, 2011.

By: [Signature]
 Fee Owner of Property Owner

Title: _____

[Signature]
 Notary Public



pdd 6/15/11
 1200.00
 Page 1 of _____

pdd 7-18-11

ZONING PETITION SUFFICIENCY CHECK SHEET

REZONING

CUP

NCUP

2nd
FIRST SUBMITTED

DATE PETITION SUBMITTED:

7-18-11

DATE OFFICIALLY RECEIVED:

7-27-11

RESUBMITTED

DATE PETITION RESUBMITTED

DATE OFFICIALLY RECEIVED:

PARCELS ELIGIBLE:

15

PARCELS REQUIRED:

10

PARCELS SIGNED:

10

PARCELS ELIGIBLE:

PARCELS REQUIRED:

PARCELS SIGNED:

CHECKED BY:

Paul Dabriel

DATE:

7-27-11

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

AFFIDAVIT OF PETITIONER FOR A REZONING

STATE OF MINNESOTA)

:SS

COUNTY OF RAMSEY)

North Real Estate, LLC
Cesar Dominguez

The petitioner, *Rolando Aguilar Estrada*, being first duly sworn, deposes and states that the consent petition contains signatures of the owners of at least two-thirds (2/3) of all eligible properties within 100 feet of the subject property described in the petition and all property contiguous to the subject property that was owned, purchased, or sold by the petitioner within one (1) year preceding the date of the petition; petitioner is informed that the consent petition must contain signatures from each and all owners of jointly-owned property in order to constitute consent from that property and that failure to obtain consent from each and all owners could invalidate the consent petition; petitioner believes that the consent petition was signed by each of said owners and that the signature are the true and correct signatures of each and all of the parties so described.

8160 Curtis Lane, Eden Prairie Mn.
55347

612 701 8461

North Real Estate, LLC
908 Arcade St.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this
8 day of *June*, 20*11*.

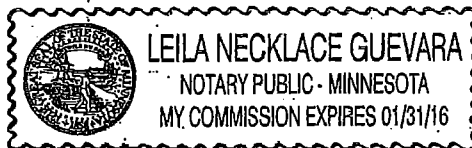
NAME

902 Arcade St. St Paul Mn

ADDRESS

612 770 6460

TELEPHONE NUMBER



NOTARY PUBLIC

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

AFFIDAVIT OF PERSON CIRCULATING CONSENT
PETITION FOR A REZONING

STATE OF MINNESOTA)

:SS.

COUNTY OF RAMSEY)

Fernando Aguilar, being first duly sworn, deposes and states that he/she is the person who circulated the consent petition consisting of 2 pages; that affiant is informed and believes the parties described on the consent petition are owners of the parcels of real estate described immediately before each name, and that each of the parties described on the consent petition is an owner of property within 100 feet of the subject property described in the petition and all properties contiguous to the subject property that was owned, purchased or sold by the petitioner within one (1) year preceding the date of the petition; that the consent petition was signed by each said owner; and the signatures are the true and correct signatures of each and all of the parties so described.

Fernando Aguilar Estrada
358 Bates Ave
St Paul MN 55106

Fernando Aguilar
NAME

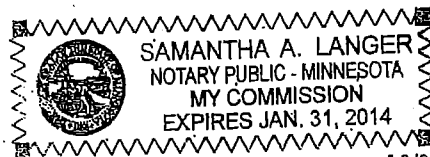
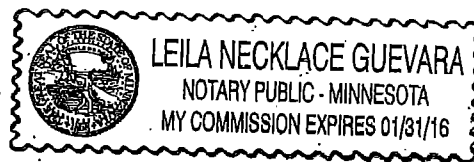
25 Jackson Ave S
ADDRESS

(609) 475-6537
TELEPHONE NUMBER

Subscribed and sworn to before me this

8 day of June, 2011

NOTARY PUBLIC



10/08

Samantha Langer 7-18-11

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

CONSENT OF ADJOINING PROPERTY OWNERS FOR A REZONING

We, the undersigned, owners of the property within 100 feet of the total contiguous description of real estate owned, purchased, or sold by THE PETITIONER within one year preceding the date of this petition acknowledge that we have been presented with the following:

1. A copy of the petition of Cesar N Dominguez
Rolando Aguilar Estrada, North Real Estate, LLC
(name of petitioner)

to rezone the property located at 833 York Ave E, St Paul, MN 55106
902 Arcade St, S 908 Arcade St
from a RT1 zoning district to a TN2 zoning district and

2. A copy of sections 66.321 through 66.343, inclusive of the Saint Paul Zoning Code.

We acknowledge that we are aware of all of the uses permitted in a TN2 zoning district, and we are aware that any of these uses can be established upon City Council approval of the rezoning. We hereby consent to the rezoning of the property in the petition of

Cesar Dominguez
Rolando Aguilar Estrada
North Real Estate, LLC to a TN2 zoning district.
(name of petitioner)

We consent to the approval of this rezoning as it was explained to us by the applicant or his/her representative.

ADDRESS OR PIN #	RECORD OWNER	SIGNATURE	DATE
902 Arcade St	Rolando Aguilar		6/7/11
908 Arcade St	North Real Estate LLC		6/7/11
817 York Ave	Barbara Harts		6/7/11
840 Sims Ave	Travis Haas		6/7/11
841 York Ave	Ronald Croninger		6/7/11
840 Sims Ave	TRAVIS HAAS		6/7/11
923 Arcade St	Joseph Chu		6/8/11
923 Arcade St	Chad Lee		6/8/11
912-916 Arcade St	DONALD M. MOE		6/8/2011
828 Sims Ave E	WFM Properties LLC		6/8/11
833 York Ave E	Cesar Dominguez		6/8/11

NOTE: This petition shall not be considered as officially filed until the lapse of seven (7) working days after it is received by the Planning Division. Any signator of this petition may withdraw his/her name therefrom by written request within that time.

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

CONSENT OF ADJOINING PROPERTY OWNERS FOR A REZONING

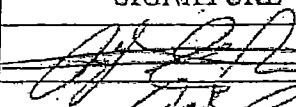
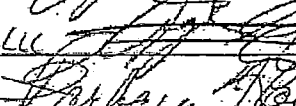
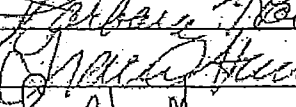
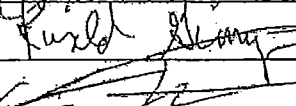
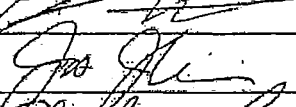
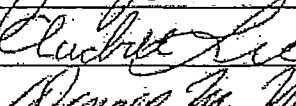
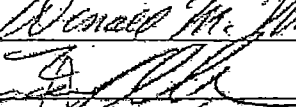
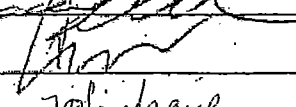
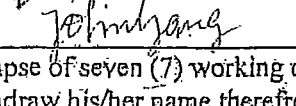
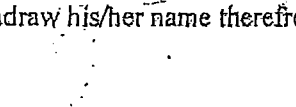


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840 Sims Ave	TRAVIS HAAS		6/7/11
923 Arcade St	Joseph Lee		6/8/11
923 Arcade St	Quicket Lee		6/8/11
912-916 Arcade St.	DONALD M. MOE		6/8/2011
828 Sims Ave E.	WFM Properties LLC		6/8/11
833 York Ave E.	Cesar Dominguez		6/8/11
844 Sims Ave	John Yang		6-28-11

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9/08

844 Sims Ave mee bid up mee bid up

7-15-11

Fig. 1. View of 902
Arcade St & 908 Arcade
St, looking northeast
from York/Arcade
intersection

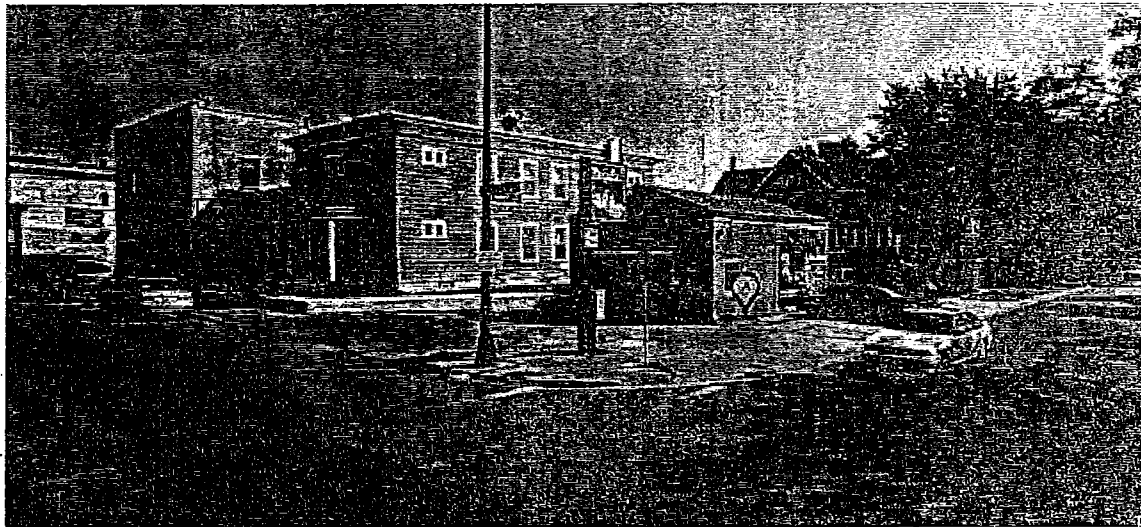


Fig. 2. View of rear
of 902 Arcade St &
908 Arcade St,
looking north
along boundary
with 833 York Ave
E.

Fig. 3. View of current sideyard of
833 York Ave E, looking north

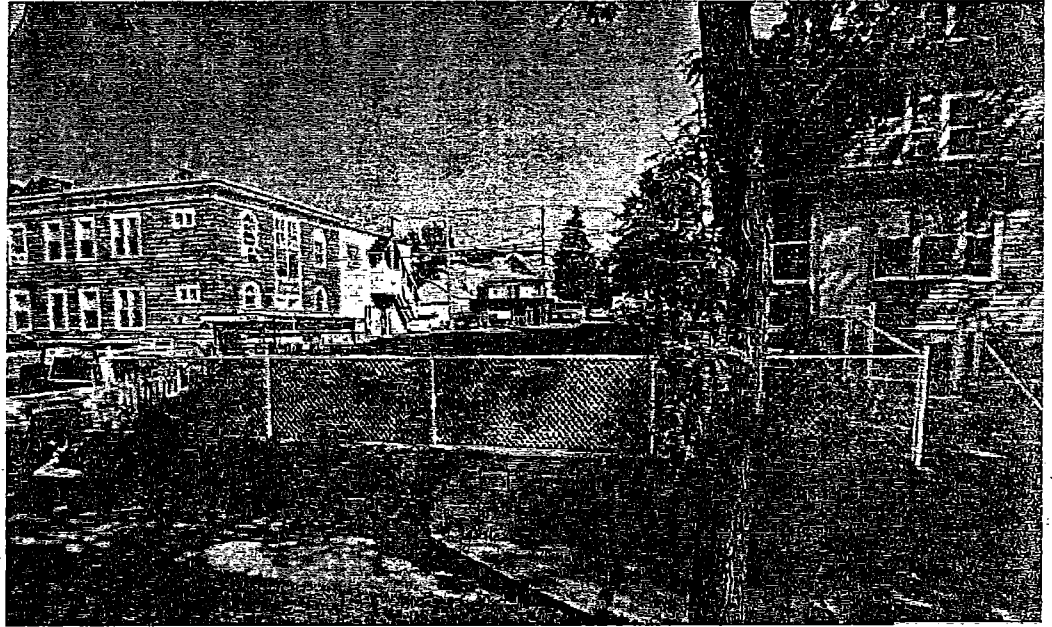
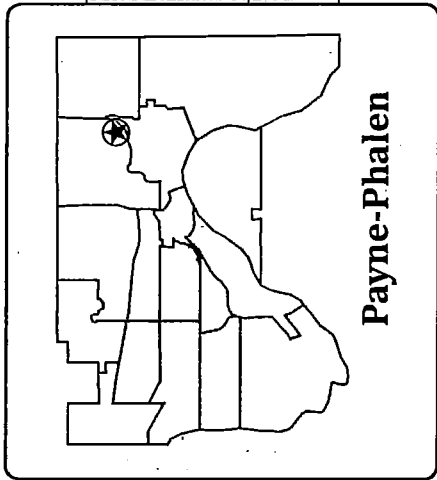
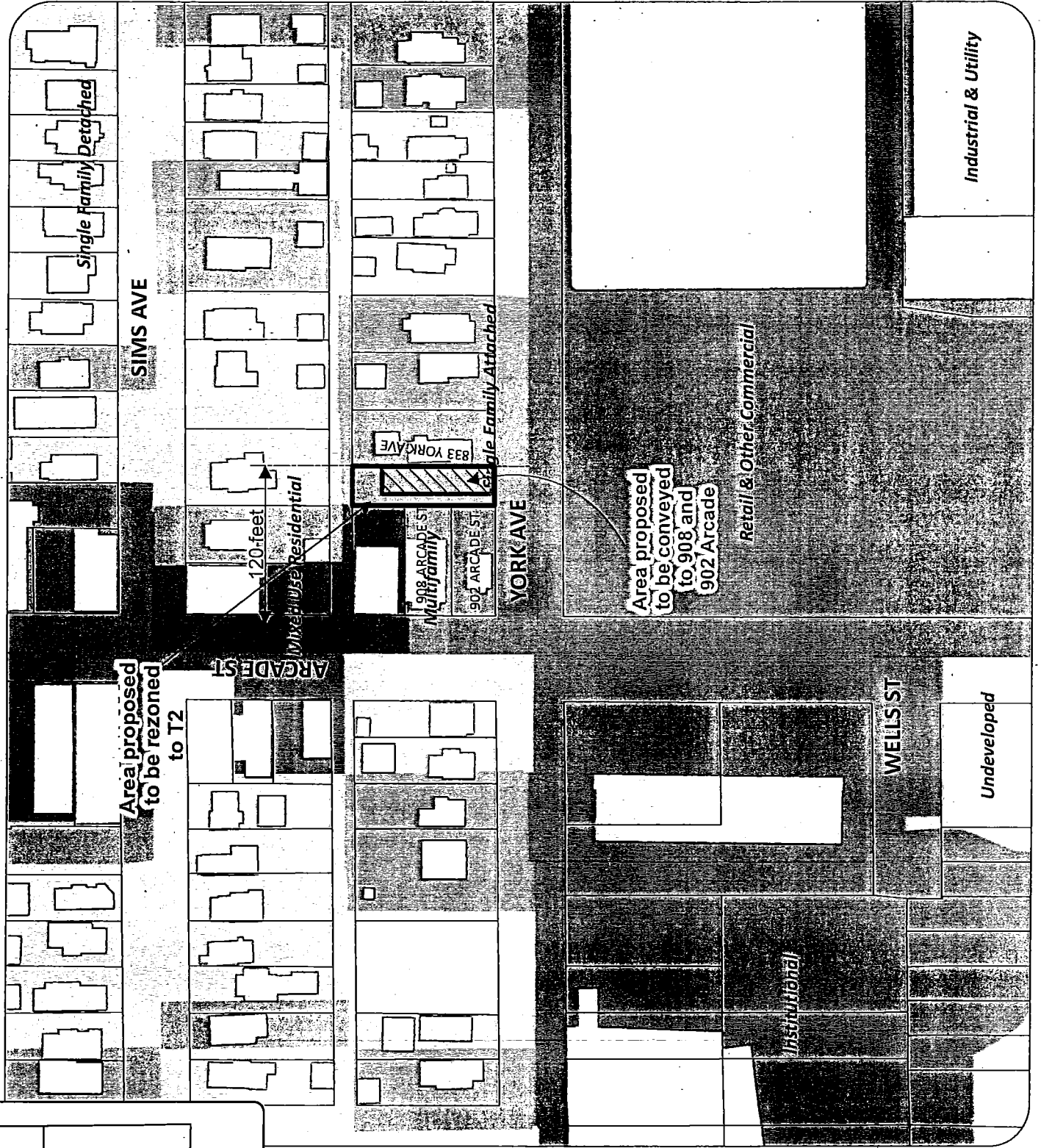


Fig. 4. View from 833 York
Ave, looking south at
Seeger Square commercial
center

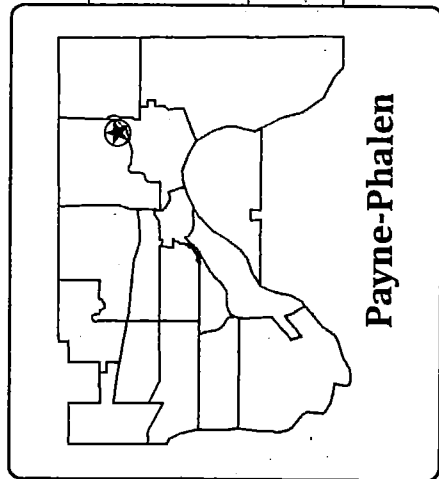
Current Land Use



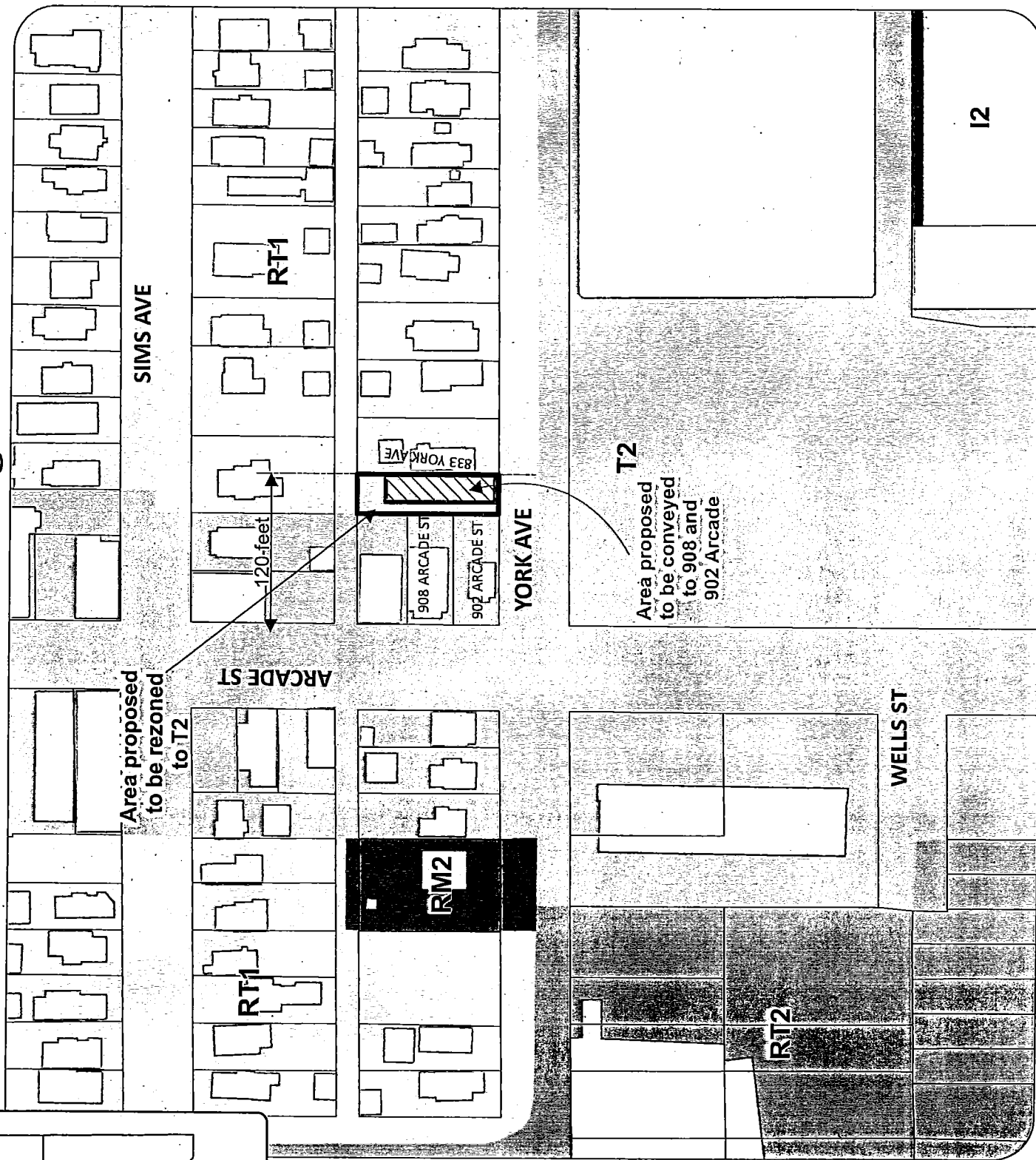
Properties for rezoning:
 *908 Arcade (existing and proposed new portions of)
 *902 Arcade (proposed new portion of)



Current Zoning



- Properties for rezoning:**
- *908 Arcade (existing and proposed new portions of)
 - *902 Arcade (proposed new portion of)



ZONING COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

1. **FILE NAME:** Meridian Industrial Appeal **FILE #** 11-260-156
 2. **APPELLANT:** Union Park District Council (District 13) **HEARING DATE:** August 25, 2011
 3. **TYPE OF APPLICATION:** Appeal of a decision by staff to approve a site plan
 4. **LOCATION:** 650 Pelham Blvd,
 5. **PIN & LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** 322923210029, Geo H. Watsons Rearrangement Subj To Blvd And Hwy The W 225 Ft Of Blk B
 6. **PLANNING DISTRICT:** 12 **PRESENT ZONING:** I1
 7. **ZONING CODE REFERENCE:** § 61.402.c and 61.701
 8. **STAFF REPORT DATE:** 8/18/11 **BY:** Tom Beach
 9. **DATE RECEIVED:** August 1, 2011 **60-DAY DEADLINE FOR ACTION:** October 1, 2011
-

A. **PURPOSE:** Appeal by the Union Park District Council of a decision by zoning staff to approve the site plan for an office/warehouse development submitted by Meridian Development.

B. **PARCEL SIZE:** Approximately 5 acres (210,000 sq. ft.)

C. **EXISTING LAND USE:** Vacant (I1) The previous use was a trucking facility with trailer storage.

D. **SURROUNDING LAND USE:**

North: Railroad tracks and industrial (TN4)

East: Industrial (I2)

South: Freeway and single-family (R4)

West: Industrial (I1)

E. **ZONING CODE CITATION:** Section 61.402. c lists the conditions that a site plan must meet in order to be approved. Section 61.701 sets the rules for filing appeals of administrative decisions by staff.

F. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The site plan shows a 68,000 square foot one-story office/warehouse building. (See enclosed plans.)

- The building is designed so the amount of office space versus warehouse can change, depending on the needs of the tenants. The owner says he hopes to attract more office tenants than warehouse tenants since office space generates higher rents compared to warehouse space.
- There would be office space on three sides of the building (Pelham, Wabash and I94) with parking in front. There would be truck docks on the east side (facing Rock Tenn property).
- The parking lot on Pelham would be setback 25' from the public sidewalk and the setback area would be landscaped with trees, shrubs, grass and an ornamental fence. There are railroad tracks on the south side of Wabash. The space between the parking lot and tracks would be landscaped with trees, shrubs, grass and an ornamental fence.
- A public sidewalk would be built along Pelham with a grass boulevard, street trees and lantern light fixtures. A public sidewalk is not planned along Wabash because there are railroad tracks on the south side of Wabash. Pedestrian connections between the public sidewalk and the building are shown in three locations.
- The existing bicycle lane in Pelham Blvd. will remain.
- Requirements for stormwater management will be handled by a large pond at the southeast corner of the site.

G. HISTORY:

Aerial photos show that this site and the properties to the north, east and west have had industrial uses since the 1950s. The most recent use for the property was a trucking facility with trailer storage. The site was cleared and soils were cleaned up in 2010 to prepare it for development.

The City has been planning for the Central Corridor in anticipation of Light Rail being built on University Avenue.

- The City adopted a plan for the area near the Raymond Light Rail station in October 2008 to establish a framework for development. This site is immediately south of the Station Area Planning boundary. However, the site is located within the Prestige Employment Future Character Area and that section of the plan contains recommendations for building form and land use for this area.
- The City did a major planning study of the entire Light Rail Corridor – the Central Corridor Development Strategy. This plan called for a study to rezone land near the Light Rail Corridor but did not make specific recommendations about rezonings.
- The City followed up with the Central Corridor / Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Study. The original recommendation in the study was to rezone this site to T4, and the land north to University Avenue to T3 and T4. The standards in the T4 require dense development with buildings built set up to the street. When the Planning Commission considered whether to change the zoning from I1 to T4, the property owner testified and requested that the property remain I1. The property owner showed a drawing (enclosed) and a video to the Planning Commission that is substantially the same as what is shown on the current site plan. The Planning Commission recommended that the site remain I1 and the City Council voted unanimously on 4/6/11 to keep this property I1 while rezoning the properties to the north to T3 and T4.
- Union Park was not aware that the zoning was kept as I1 and assumed it had been rezoned to T4.

The site plan for this project was originally submitted to the City for review in October 2010. At that time the property was still subject to the standards for the Central Corridor Overlay Zoning District. These standards required a two story building and a minimum Floor Area Ratio of 1.0. When the developer became aware of this, he withdrew the application.

The applicant resubmitted the site plan. The property was zoned I1 at that time and since the Central Corridor Overlay Zoning District and its design standards were no longer in effect, the site was only subject to Citywide design standards as they apply to I1 properties.

The District Council requested that a public hearing be held on the site plan. The Zoning Committee declined to hold a hearing and let the staff conduct the site plan review.

Staff approved the site plan on 7/20/11.

Union Park District Council filed their appeal of staff's decision on 8/1/11

H. DISTRICT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION: The appeal was filed by the Union Park District Council which is located immediately south (across I94) from the site. The site is located in the Saint Anthony Park Community Council area. They expressed opposition to the site plan during the site plan review process but they have not submitted a response on the appeal.

I. FINDINGS:

1. The appeal filed by Union Park District Council (Exhibit A) begins by listing four main issues as the basis for the appeal:
 - "The site plan is not consistent with planning documents for the site", including the Central Corridor Development Strategy, Raymond Station Area Plan, and Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan.
 - "The City Code encourages buildings to "hold the corner" on sites at intersections.
 - "There was no community design process to effectively resolve community concerns with the project."
 - "The City Council did not zone the site TN as recommended in planning documents."

The appeal continues with a long section describing how Union Park believes the plan is not consistent with provisions from a number of City planning documents. (See Exhibit A.)

The appeal ends with a request that the Planning Commission require that the site plan be designed to conform to the following standards that address Union Parks concerns:

- 1) Buildings should hold the corners at Pelham and Wabash; there should not be more than 15 feet between the sidewalk and any building
 - 2) Sidewalks should be installed on both Pelham and Wabash.
 - 3) Buildings should have façade articulation consistent with the historic district at Pelham and University
 - 4) Any parking spaces should be behind the building or underground to reduce pervious pavement and encourage the use of public transportation, especially the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit.
 - 5) There should be at least two occupied stories on any building at the site
 - 6) Windows adjacent to the streets should be prominent and perpetuate a storefront
 - 7) Doorways should be located close to street and emphasized architecturally
 - 8) Incorporate artistic elements reflective of the Creative Enterprise artists
 - 9) Increased building density
 - 10) Mixed commercial and industrial use at the site
 - 11) Design any building at the site to facilitate and encourage the growth and expansion of our local industry and buildings. First opportunity for tenants at the site should be local businesses looking to expand. Confirm tenants for the building prior to construction.
2. Staff has prepared a response (Exhibit B.) to the each of the issues raised by Union Park in their appeal and concludes that the site plan is consistent with plans for the area and addresses the issues raised in the appeal.

3. The site plan complies with zoning standards and all other applicable ordinances of the City.

Office/warehouse is a permitted use in I1. One-story buildings are permitted in I1. The building and site conform to Citywide design standards. The site plan meets the standards for stormwater set by the City and the Capitol Region Watershed. The developer submitted a Traffic Impact Study for the project which was reviewed and approved by Saint Paul Public Works. The site plan meets zoning standards for landscaping.

- J. **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Based on the above findings, staff recommends denial of the appeal by the Union Park District Council of the decision by zoning staff to approve the site plan for an office/warehouse development at 650 Pelham.

Attachments

Appeal filed by Union Park

Response prepare by staff

Site plan approval letter, approved site plan and building elevations

Aerial rendering of proposed building and site

Plans referred to in the staff report can be read on line at <http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=504>

Union Park District Council
1570 Concordia Ave, Suite LL100
St Paul, MN 55104

Appeal filed
by Union Park.

August 1, 2011

Planning Commission of the City of St Paul
15 W Kellogg Blvd
St Paul, MN 55102

Re: Site Plan 10-906716

Appeal of Site Plan for Meridian Industrial Center at 650 Pelham Boulevard

The Union Park District Council (UPDC) appeals the staff approval to allow for construction of a 68,000 sq. ft. building at 650 Pelham Boulevard. Tom Beach, Zoning Specialist of the City of St Paul, approved this site plan on July 20, 2011.

The Union Park District Council has thoroughly reviewed the site plans as set forth in the staff-approved documents, explained by the Port Authority at a public meeting held by Union Park on June 27th, 2011, in relevant City zoning codes, and in subsequent meetings with City staff, Port Authority staff, and community representatives.

Based on this review, it is the position of the UPDC that the approval of this site plan is not soundly based in conjunction with city-approved planning documents for the site, nor in the best interest of the City of St. Paul or its residents. Because of this, the UPDC must conclude that the site plan will allow a single developer to gain economic advantage in developing this parcel while spreading adverse effects over the immediate neighborhood, the city, and its residents.

The Union Park District Council urges the Saint Paul Planning Commission to reverse the decision to approve the requested Site Plan #10-906716 for a development at Pelham and Wabash.

The following details our rationale for this appeal:

1. The site plan is not consistent with planning documents for the site.
2. The City Code encourages buildings to 'hold the corner' on sites at intersections.
3. There was no community design process to effectively resolve community concerns with the project.
4. The City Council did not zone the site TN as recommended in planning documents.

1. The Meridian Industrial Project Site Plan is not consistent with content in the following planning documents:

-St. Anthony Park Community District Plan

Union Park District Council
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St Paul, MN 55104

- Merriam Park Master Plan
- Central Corridor Development Strategy
- Raymond Station Area Plan
- St Paul Comprehensive Plan
- Mississippi River Corridor Plan
- West Midway Task Force

A. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the St Anthony Park Community Council District Plan

Land Use 4. Study potential locations to rezone around commercial and industrial areas to establish a gradual transition between land uses and building forms to assure compatibility of adjacent land uses and densities. Goal is to buffer single-family uses with more appropriate uses (multi-family) near commercial and industrial areas.

The Meridian Industrial Center is not an appropriate buffer between the single-family homes to the south and the transit-oriented development (TOD) to the north.

Design Standards. Institute commercial mixed-use design standards that reinforce human-scale buildings, promote sustainable design, promote quality in exterior materials and construction, reinforce a pedestrian oriented streetscape, promote green design, manage storm water retention, reduce impervious surfaces and visually screen surface parking.

The building's setback does not facilitate a pedestrian-oriented streetscape; neither does fencing. The building's entrance should be immediately off the curb and the façade should incorporate the historic nature of both the Desnoyer Park neighborhood and the Raymond/University historic zone.

9. Conduct zoning study as part of the Raymond area station planning to evaluate rezoning the University-Raymond TOD district to TN districts to achieve standards and design that respect the area's historic quality, enhance its pedestrian accessibility, and encourage increased transit use.

The area was part of the Central Corridor overlay district, but 650 Pelham remained I1. This zoning allows the site, although it is in both the Area of Change for the Raymond Station and specified as a major site for redevelopment corridor-wide, with few restrictions.

Streetscape Enhancement Plan. Develop and implement a long-term streetscape plan to achieve the economic development, livability, identity and transportation goals of the community.

The Meridian Industrial Center, as is, sets a minimal standard of development for the area. This project will facilitate other developments along Pelham and in the corridor to build to the developer's needs and not to the potential of the corridor. This project is underutilizing the site and scoffing hundreds of people's time and work visioning the future of the corridor.

The Wabash Commons, open space proposed for just north of the site, requires a better transitional building between the Desnoyer neighborhood and the open space. Pedestrians travel along Pelham for work, play, shopping, and transportation. Pelham is a corridor that connects CCLRT to Union Park's westernmost neighborhood, and being the only north-south connection between the Mississippi River and Cretin Ave, Pelham Blvd is essentially, and naturally, both a transportation and pedestrian connection that needs to be enhanced.

Pelham also serves as the route for the Midtown Greenway and is a current bicycle route for many traveling by the alternate means of transportation. The Meridian Industrial Center needs to better emphasize its location on the bike route and encourage more bike travel to and along Pelham.

11. Create gateways of architectural and landscape significance to announce entry into the neighborhood.

The St. Anthony Park Community Council's top priority for a new parkway is Raymond Avenue. This would include a realigned Raymond Avenue south of University to connect with Pelham Boulevard just north of Interstate 94.

The St Anthony Park community plans to realign a better connection between Pelham and Raymond, a development that will significantly improve Pelham Avenue and require better streetscape and transition into the station. The Meridian Industrial Center is proposed at a unique location, with a prominent neighborhood immediately south and a vibrant urban village just blocks north. The development should transition between the two, facilitating a sense of space and encourage pedestrian travel and an urban, not suburban design.

26. All new commercial and industrial developments requiring site plan approval should generally be designed to have at least the main entrance facade oriented to the street with access for pedestrians and bicyclists taking priority over vehicular access.

As communicated clearly to the developers, the communities surrounding the site want to have development. It has also been clearly communicated that any development needs to hold the corner at Pelham and Wabash.

B. The Meridian Industrial Center does not conform to standards in the Merriam Park Master Plan (adopted by the City Council as an Addendum to the City of St. Paul's Comprehensive Plan 4 Feb 2004)

The intent of the Merriam Park Master plan was to continue to develop the Merriam Park neighborhood into an urban village. Strong single-family homes and engaged neighbors helped to create a plan that would better reflect and guide the future of the area.

2. Major new development should be mixed-use and located along transit routes or on underused or inappropriately developed sites

The Meridian Industrial Center does not follow these guidelines, set forth to better facilitate the transition close to residential neighborhoods.

15. Merriam Park should be a friendly, encouraging place for small to medium-sized businesses to grow. Expansion of existing businesses will be favored over the establishment of new businesses, particularly those that would have a negative impact on the community because of congestion, character, or use.

The expansion of local business to the site should have priority.

21. This plan supports the St. Paul Land Use Plan's definition of green spaces, parks, and the river as urban amenities. Green spaces and corridors should be encouraged in the community wherever possible, such as along railroad tracks and roads.

The Merriam Park Master Plan encourages green space along rail tracks, and this site has excellent potential with its location situated between a current neighborhood and proposed green space at Wabash Commons.

24. The community supports initiatives that promote biking, busing, and other means of transportation as alternatives to single-occupant vehicles. Bike lanes, and bikes racks in commercial areas and on buses should be added. Connecting St. Paul to the Midtown Greenway in Minneapolis is supported when feasible.

The developer needs to acknowledge and incorporate the future Midtown Greenway and the intrinsic connection this site has to that project.

The Site Plan does not conform to expectations of the Desnoyer neighborhood.

The Desnoyer Park Improvement Association believes that the project design is not keeping with its urban neighborhood, and may sit empty without tenants after construction. It is not a long-term development, but merely a hasty development that is not reflective of the neighborhood's needs. The land is immediately across a walking bridge from homes and the fact that it is so close to a main artery of the Central Corridor requires more thought and community input. A UPDC community meeting residents spoke to their concerns for the project, which were not addressed and remain.

C. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the Central Corridor Development Strategy (adopted by City Council in 2007)

Outlining how the Central Corridor should be developed, the CC Development Strategy describes the vision and a set of strategies for how the Central Corridor should grow and change in response to the investment in LRT. The six principles in the strategy, guiding the preparation of plans for each of the transit station areas, are:

- *Reposition Saint Paul in the region.*
- *Benefit and strengthen the diverse community along the Central Corridor.*
- *Link and foster economic activity.*

- *Improve people's mobility throughout their community.*
- *Improve the image and quality of life along the Central Corridor.*
- *Collaborate from design to operation.*

The Meridian Industrial project does not incorporate and place-making features that will strengthen the community along CCLRT, nor

3.2 Site has been identified as a Major Opportunity for Development within the area of change. There is heightened potential for the future development at the site.

3.3 Towards a Transit-Supportive Corridor Making Development "Fit"

- *Design new development to provide a transition in scale and ensure it fits into its surroundings, improves existing street conditions, and integrates well with existing neighborhoods and communities.*

- *Achieve minimum ground level floor-to-ceiling heights of 13' along major streets such as the Avenue and at important intersections.*

- *Fill gaps in the street with new buildings or by grouping buildings to create walkable clusters of activity that will animate the public realm.*

The Meridian project does not fit with the surrounding buildings; Pelham has a variety of uses, and many building are built up to the curb. Also, none of the surrounding neighborhoods approve this development as one that will better the community, but rather set a sub-par standard of development for the area.

Transit-Supportive Land Uses & Densities

- *Promote a mix of transit-supportive uses, such as medium-to-high density residential, small-format retail, restaurants and institutions.*
- *Provide a range of housing types and sizes that will cater to both new and existing members of the community.*
- *Animate the street by positioning entrances to individual units at grade and by locating active uses such as restaurants and retail on the ground floor.*

There needs to be an active connection to Pelham, and attractive first floor tenants.

Transit-Supportive Access, Circulation & Parking

- *Locate parking so that it does not detract from the image of the area by placing it internal to the block, within parking ramps, inside buildings or below ground.*
- *Seek opportunities to consolidate parking, access and servicing.*
- *Seek to develop balanced and coordinated networks of movement that allow for a mix of pedestrian, bicycle, LRT, bus, and vehicular circulation.*

The parking for the current project detract from the design of the building and draws attention away from the street. There is no consolidation of parking and a lack of focus on CCLRT transportation, biking and walking.

A Green, Attractive & Connected Pedestrian Environment

Union Park District Council
1570 Concordia Ave, Suite LL100
St Paul, MN 55104

- *Design open spaces as a focus for new development and work towards improving pedestrian amenities along the Corridor, especially adjacent to stations.*
- *Extend existing streets, open spaces and open space linkages to strengthen connections with the surrounding community*

There needs to be planned connectivity to the future Wabash Commons.

In addition, the outlined Market Potential of the Station Area outlines that by 2030 there will be no industrial in the Raymond station area. This proposed project would far outlast that projection if built, deviating from the desired use at the station area. (Image attached)

D. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the Raymond Station Area Plan

The Raymond area is historically St. Paul's largest industrial district. The properties are typically one to seven-story brick and stone structures that originally housed factories, warehouses, offices, and commercial spaces.

2.3 Defining the Study Area

The Raymond Station Area has potential to evolve as a place with more employment, a greater range of businesses, more vibrant neighborhoods, and new and enhanced beautiful public spaces. The station area plan process used four mapping layers to investigate and understand the Raymond Station Area. The station area boundary extends east of the ¼ mile zone to capture larger potential development parcels located along Vandalia, and farther west and south to include a number of underutilized, sites with excellent access and frontage relative to Highway 280 and Interstate 94. This boundary is the primary focus for all recommendations contained within this document.

Within the boundary, a refined Area of Change has been delineated through the station area planning process. The Area of Change denotes the parcels where change is welcome and should be encouraged, whether through gradual infill, intensification or comprehensive redevelopment.

2.4 Looking Ahead – the Raymond Station Area in 2030

Looking Ahead describes a community-crafted vision for the future of the Raymond Station Area. This narrative generally describes the sum of desired characteristics for this community, and its future role within the broader Central Corridor. The Raymond Station Area will successfully accommodate new forms of residential and commercial infill, while preserving and strengthening both the historic character of the area and the integrity of its employment uses. The potential for a new employment district is identified adjacent to the confluence of Highway 280 and Interstate 94, where excellent access and visibility create a strong economic development opportunity. New development within the Station Area will reflect the architectural scale and character of existing historic buildings, to strengthen this emerging urban village.

Raymond Station Area Vision:

A model mixed-use urban village that successfully combines new and old: buildings, streets, land uses, and modes of transportation. This Station Area will evolve with an authenticity and sense of place that distinguishes it within the Corridor, and becomes a must-see district for visitors seeking to discover the places that make Saint Paul unique.

FIGURE 3.3 - Wabash Commons is a focal point for the larger bicycle and pedestrian movement network and the new redevelopment parcels surrounding it.

Wabash Commons: A significant public space is proposed along the north side of Wabash to create a focal point for a future employment hub south of the Avenue. Similar to its proposed sister 'Commons' in the Westgate Station Area, the Wabash Commons is intended to be a high-quality space, enhancing the place making and real estate value for adjacent office and employment uses. Its size will support both active and passive uses.

- Wabash Commons, Myrtle Hinge, Top of the Village Park and Charles Street park network offer opportunities to explore and illuminate the history and promise of the Raymond Area through interactive installations and interpretive walkways.*
- Pelham University Gateway: a left over space, offers opportunity to mark and celebrate the entrance to the Raymond Station Area. While public art opportunities are broadly available to national and even international artists, special efforts should be made to engage local artists.*

In this burgeoning arts district, there are opportunities for private property owners to engage artists as they envision their overall developments and holdings and to commission public art, particularly where private property intersects the public right-of-way.

Future investment in Raymond's Station Area must build on and strengthen the qualities of the University-Raymond Commercial Historic District. Preserving the integrity and character of the area's defining architectural history will be vital to the continued success of land use and development in the Raymond Station Area. Nothing in this plan should be deemed to contradict the University-Raymond Commercial Historic District Design Review Guidelines, but should instead reinforce, and be read in conjunction with, this important legislative document. Also, important to the long term economic and social health of the area is the preservation of viable employment uses with a long term economic future, while continuing to promote new and diverse residential and employment uses that are transit-supportive. The Raymond Station Area requires a flexible and permissive land use strategy that emphasizes connectivity, design performance and transit-supportive qualities, including a broad mix of uses, flexibility of regulation over time, active first level uses, and shared parking solutions. Together, these approaches will assist to strengthen and repair the area's "Main Street" quality, and reinforce the fabric of the area as a complete community with housing, employment and movement options for all.

While this overall direction will help guide change over the entire Raymond Station Area, this section describes four distinct Character Areas that will require specific policy direction to achieve their built form and land use potential over time. The following Character Areas descriptions and policy directions provide clear guidance to the forms of development and investment that will support the future of the broader station area.

4.1 Raymond Historic Village

The Raymond Historic Village will be a model of a vibrant commercial corridor that supports people living and working in a revitalized historic district. The University-Raymond Commercial Historic District, designated by the Saint Paul City Council in 2005, developed in the early 20th century (1891-1941) as the city's largest industrial area and a national transportation center. Nearly all of the properties in the district are related to some aspect of the activities of the Minnesota Transfer Railway, or the early years of the trucking industry. The district's 22 contributing buildings, most of them with high exterior integrity, reflect the evolution of the area from the railroad era to the interstate highway system era. A set of design review guidelines was adopted by the City Council when the district was designated. They are used by the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) to review permits for rehabilitation, restoration, new construction and demolition. The guidelines address masonry and walls, windows and doors, signs and accessories, new construction, non-contributing and contemporary buildings, and demolition. Any proposed development within the historic district boundaries will need to comply with the HPC's guidelines, as well as the key moves and policy directions in the Raymond Station Area Plan. The adaptive re-use of existing historic and employment buildings, and the sensitive construction of infill uses, will combine a range of residential, commercial, employment and cultural uses while maintaining and strengthening the scale and character of the existing village. Pedestrian-scaled streets will connect the main spine of the Avenue north and south to a wealth of employment anchors and stable residential communities. The LRT platform will effectively extend the village qualities of the Avenue east to Carleton. Though the Raymond village is primarily focused along University Avenue, larger full-block development parcels will exhibit a relationship and secondary orientation to inner blocks where employment uses are located.

4.1.1 Built Form-New development should fit with its surroundings.

a) New development along University Avenue should be 2 to 6 residential stories in height with transitions that respect the existing scale and character of the historic buildings along the street. The northeast corner exhibits potential for taller building heights, and could reach 6-8 stories if setback from the intersection on a 3-4 story podium-type building.

b) New development should ensure that buildings have strong street presence along University, Charles and Myrtle. Buildings along Myrtle and Charles may step down to two stories.

- c) New development should be sited to ensure an adequate public realm and pedestrian promenade.*
- d) New buildings on corner sites should front both streets and utilize their corner positioning as a distinctive feature in their design similar to the Specialty Building.*
- e) Building design should incorporate materials and an architectural style that is distinguishable as contemporary, yet compatible with adjacent historic buildings through scale, rhythm, color and materials, while meeting the University-Raymond Commercial Historic District Design Guidelines. All new development should promote transparency and activity at street level.*
- f) First floor commercial or retail uses should help to animate the street by incorporating large glass frontages that allow the activity within to be seen from the street and have at least one entrance that is oriented towards Raymond or University Avenue, access points to the station platforms, and/or key gathering places.*
- g) Commercial or retail uses should be located in the first floor of all buildings within the Priority Active Frontage zones identified on page 25.*

4.1.2 Land Use & Development Pattern

Urban Infill along the Avenue should have many uses.

- a) A broad mix of uses should be concentrated along the edges of the Avenue where they provide an easy connection to public transit, and benefit from the visibility and profile of being located on a major transportation corridor.*
- b) Live-work units may be permitted on the first floor of all buildings beyond the Priority Active Frontage areas. All new private development must contribute to adjacent streetscape improvements.*
- g) As development occurs, seek opportunities to increase north/south mid block connections such as the one created at Carleton Lofts.*
- h) All streets should provide sidewalks, adequate lighting and streetscape amenity.*

The University-Raymond Commercial Historic District outlined above is comprised of numerous contributing buildings, many of which are 1-2 stories in height. New development should respect the scale and character of the existing buildings while filling in the gaps to intensify the district...

4.2 A Prestige Employment District

The accessibility and centrality ... [and] highly visible and accessible frontage would be ideal for a linear corporate campus for large corporate office buildings or a series of multi-tenanted research park, laboratory and office buildings. These attributes may also make the area attractive for a new hotel and conference center catering to downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul, the University of Minnesota, and/or the general Twin Cities Region market...

4.2.1 Built Form

- c) Further east and toward the center of the Station Area, buildings should step down to a maximum height of 6-8 stories around the proposed Wabash Commons.*
 - d) Full-block, large floorplate commercial developments should be permitted.*
 - e) New development should exhibit a strong relationship to both the Cromwell frontage and Wabash Commons to ensure there are no backlotting conditions on either of these important spaces. Commercial uses should be principally oriented towards Cromwell Avenue. Buildings adjacent to the Commons should have direct access to it.*
- Building density and size at the site should reflect the potential of the corridor and the possibility of higher job density.*

4.5 Managed Parking Strategies... To properly assess and manage Park & Ride and Hide & Ride, comprehensive strategies must be implemented so that remaining on- and off-street parking can best serve residents and businesses in the corridor, and support walkable, transit-oriented neighborhoods. Clearly, the reliance on surface parking at current development standards is a large contributor to the underutilization of land within the Station Area. A transformation from surface parking to structured and underground parking will need to happen over time and in conjunction with new development. The following policies provide the direction to facilitate this transformation that will be critical to the creation of active and vibrant streets within the Raymond Station Area. There is a huge possibility that there will be park&hide activity with the too-large and underutilized parking lot planned for the Meridian Industrial Center.

- a) The establishment of new single-use surface parking lots on University Avenue, and the expansion of existing lots within the station areas, should be discouraged.*
- b) Major redevelopment sites should be explored for opportunities to create shared, structured or below grade parking.*
- c) Where surface parking occurs along University Avenue this should occur to the side or behind buildings and be limited to a maximum of 60-feet in width (for the provision of 2 parking aisles and one drive aisle) and should utilize landscape buffers to minimize the impact on the pedestrian environment.*
- d) Parking requirements should be reduced or eliminated to reduce development costs, support transit ridership and open new possibilities for flexible live-work spaces on smaller sites where on-site parking is not available.*

There should be the least amount possible of new parking created along the CCLRT, especially in the station areas. 200 spaces of parking for the proposed building is superfluous.

5.1 Connections

The goal of this section is to identify improved movement options for pedestrians, transit riders and cyclists in reaching the Raymond Station Area from adjacent neighborhoods and the broader Corridor. The Connections diagram (Figure 5.1) identifies key routes to and within the Raymond Station Area, and illustrates recommendations for improving the connectivity, safety, efficiency and quality of these routes for pedestrians and cyclists, including...Midtown Greenway Connection- The long-term feasibility of reconciling grade difference between Pelham Boulevard and the future Midtown Greenway bike route should be explored.

Both Pelham and Wabash are identified in the plan as bike routes. This classification requires the explicit attention to the Greenway development and reflective development along the routes.

E. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the City of St Paul Comprehensive Plan

Implementation

[The plan aims to] capitalize on the potential of the Central Corridor. The construction of light rail transit in the Central Corridor provides opportunities for the city to realize its potential as a complex, sophisticated urban center with denser housing and employment centers.... Cultural and historic resources enhance the lives of Saint Paul residents and visitors by defining the character of the city and creating a strong link to its rich past. Protecting these resources through the use of historic preservation tools will minimize such threats as lack of maintenance, development pressures, and challenges to finding appropriate uses for contemporary times.

Land Use

[This is a] Mixed-Use Corridor. This land use consists primary of thoroughfares through the city that are served by public transit (or could be in the future). Mixed-Use Corridors include areas where two or more of the following uses are or could be located: residential, commercial, retail, office, small scale industry, institutional, and open space uses. The uses in these corridors may be within a building or in buildings that are in close proximity to each other. Mixed-Use Corridors includes Neighborhood Centers, which are compact, mixed-use areas of higher density housing, as well as shopping, community amenities, and employment centers. The Central Corridor, one specific Mixed-Use Corridor, is the major transit corridor connecting Saint Paul with the University of Minnesota and Downtown Minneapolis..

Provide Land for Jobs - For Saint Paul to have a strong economy and to thrive, it must have businesses with living wage jobs. The strategy focuses on providing land for employment centers that capitalize on Saint Paul's historic strengths and emerging labor markets...

Promote Aesthetics and Development Standards - As Saint Paul continues to revitalize itself and to grow, it must be an attractive place to live, work, and visit. This strategy provides a framework

for design and aesthetics that will engage people and help integrate the built environment into the community.

2.1 Ensure the availability of sufficient quantities of land suitable for existing and new employment centers; prepare an inventory of properties zoned for industrial and commercial uses that have the potential for redevelopment as employment centers.

An inventory of vacant and underutilized buildings and land currently zoned for industrial and commercial use will provide the City and its development partners with baseline information necessary to pursue a program to develop employment centers.

2.2 Promote the redevelopment of outmoded and non-productive sites and buildings so they can sustain existing industries and attract emerging

Land Use section of the City of St Paul Comprehensive Plan

2.3 Attract industries that use best management practices regarding environmental issues (e.g., air and water quality, soil contamination, solid waste, sustainable construction practices, etc.) in their site

We would like to see state of that art development at the site, especially due to its identified potential for redevelopment.

2.15 Redevelop underutilized or vacant land in railroad corridors. There has been significant redevelopment in the Phalen Corridor and the Great Northern Corridor in the last two decades. Ample acreage is available for light industry, commercial office development, and capitalization on the growth of freight rail.

2.16 Prepare a study of the West Midway industrial area outside the line of change as identified in the Central Corridor Development Strategy to determine how the industrial area may be best used to strengthen Saint Paul's industrial sector and employment base (see Figure LU-G).

The West Midway, one of Saint Paul's historic railroad corridors, is strategically located, with much of its current business activity closely tied to the railroad lines that run through it. Many existing businesses, though successful, do not employ large numbers of people. The study, in part, will focus on how the West Midway can evolve to capture "knowledge-based" business activity and to take advantage of the potential for a jobs/housing match because of its proximity to the Central Corridor.

Land Assembly 2.23 Establish site plan review standards for the I1, I2, and I3 districts for the purposes of providing for the efficient use of land and enhancing the aesthetic quality of the district. TN development standards incorporated into the IR district enhance the appearance and functionality of an industrial development so the district is compatible with nearby commercial

and residential areas. Efficient use of a parcel will yield greater numbers of jobs for each acre of development than inefficient use.

More than 68 jobs should be required for the site, especially due to its proximity to residential areas.

3.2 Prepare design standards that provide a transition between single-family houses and nearby taller buildings. Issues that the design standards should address include, but are not limited to, height, mass, scale, and architectural context. Taller buildings might be located in Neighborhood Centers or Mixed-Use Corridors, at the edges where they abut single-family neighborhoods. This passage clearly identifies what the UPDC is seeking for this project.

3.6 Encourage improvement of safety through design, as outlined in Design for Public Safety. Design for Public Safety incorporates the principles of crime prevention through environmental design, to focus on strategies and techniques for the design of the physical environment, both of sites and buildings, which help reduce opportunities for crime (see Policy PR-1.7). Transit-Oriented Development and Pedestrian-Oriented development can be synonymous.

3.15 Support the development of guidelines to incorporate public art in City financed capital projects and larger redevelopment efforts to imbue these projects with a distinct sense of place; provide for their maintenance. Projects include infrastructure, buildings, and landscape and exclude projects that are below ground. The City should involve artists early in the planning and design of capital projects.

The Port Authority's involvement in this project should encourage the incorporation of public art or artistic elements.

3.16 Facilitate collaboration between artists and the community to identify opportunities for public art and to discuss civic issues that may inform the artist's work.

St Anthony has been identified as a Neighborhood Center by the City of St Paul.

1.11 Neighborhood Centers evolved as Saint Paul grew through the years. They all have an existing development pattern conducive to supporting a denser, mixed-use, pedestrian environment where commerce, employment, and amenities can be efficiently and effectively provided. Existing Neighborhood Centers are not all developed at the same level of intensity. Moreover, some existing Neighborhood Centers, such as Saint Anthony, are expected to have modest growth...

1.12 Balance the following objectives for Neighborhood Centers through the density and scale of development: accommodating growth, supporting transit use and walking, providing a range of housing types, providing housing at densities that support transit, and providing open space and recreational opportunities. There can be gradations of density within individual Neighborhood Centers, with denser developments at the core and less dense developments at the periphery.

1.13 Establish boundaries for Neighborhood Centers that reflect existing development patterns and functional characteristics of the area. The City should use these boundaries to guide development activity, monitor growth and other development conditions, and evaluate performance toward meeting objectives for services and community amenities.

1.14 Plan for growth in Neighborhood Centers. The City should recognize community circumstances and preferences as stated in City adopted summaries of small-area plans and district plans, while still providing additional housing opportunities at densities that support transit and walking.

As outlined above, the City should acknowledge the planning documents for the area and ensure that the intent of those plans be enacted.

1.15 Promote Neighborhood Centers as compact, mixed-use communities that provide services and employment close to residences. Mixed-use development combines three or more uses (e.g., residential, retail, office, recreation, etc.) into an integrated, pedestrian oriented real estate project that is served by transit. Whether the components of the project are within a building or in buildings that are in close proximity to each other, they are functionally integrated so that use of space is maximized. Some of the benefits of mixed-use are activating urban areas during more hours of the day, increasing housing options, reducing auto dependence, and creating a sense of place.

1.18 Provide connections for bicycles and pedestrians to community facilities (e.g., parks, recreation centers, libraries, etc.) and to activities that support the residential population; and to adjacent areas of the city.

Pelham Blvd is a direct route to Desnoyer Park and the Town and Country Club.

1.27 Provide connections by bicycle and pedestrian facilities to adjacent areas.

Historic Preservation section of the St Paul Comprehensive Plan

Neighborhood Character

6.1. Determine the character-defining features of each neighborhood that should be preserved; incorporate these features into area plans and master plans for new development.

New development at 650 Pelham should be based on the historic Desnoyer Park neighborhood and the Raymond/University historic district.

6.5. Encourage City-funded projects to protect and enhance those neighborhood physical features that define an area's visual character and urban form.

Pelham Blvd has the potential to be an unprecedented development that enhances the aesthetics of all surrounding neighborhoods. By facilitating a development that transitions between the

industrial nature of the area into a mixed-use corridor and residential border, the site can maximize it's full potential.

Transportation

2.2 Support transit-oriented design through zoning and design guidelines. Compact, street-oriented design should be emphasized to promote walkability and transit use, especially in commercial corridors. Standards for building placement and design based primarily on the needs of the pedestrian should be enforced and expanded.

As referenced above, the design and placement of any building at 650 Pelham should be pedestrian focused and promote transit use.

2.6 c. Create better north-south connections to the Central Corridor and realign or extend existing routes where appropriate.

Pelham is the main north-south connection to the CCLR for Desnoyer Park residents.

2.12 Simplify and reduce off-street parking requirements and use definitions. To promote investment in existing and historic commercial buildings, the use of a baseline exemption should be explored, where buildings with smaller footprints are not required to provide parking. New off-street parking should be further reduced and restricted in close proximity to transit lines and in Downtown to support transit rider-ship.

F. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the Mississippi River Corridor Plan

Objective 6.3 in the Mississippi River Corridor Plan identified the priority to provide safe pedestrian and bike connections from surrounding neighborhoods to the corridor and to support the development and access to greater regional systems, such as the Greenway.

Pelham is a direct connection to the Mississippi River Blvd and the Mississippi River Corridor between St Anthony Park and Desnoyer Park. Development along Pelham should reflect the requirements set forth to enhance and promote the River Corridor.

G. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the West Midway Study recommendations.

- Surface parking shall not be located within 30 feet of the corner
- Buildings shall be located to emphasize and 'anchor' the corner
- Permit 25 spaces of required parking
- Maximum set back of 15 feet from lot line
- One shade tree per five parking spaces
- Buildings shall hold the corner and shall be oriented to the corner of both public streets.

The above West Midway Task Force standards clearly identify fundamental requirements for the site that are clearly not met in the current site plan.

2. The City of St Paul Municipal Code 63 outlines standards for building.

In the City of St Paul Municipal Code 63.110, requires buildings to hold the corners, or be built up to encourage access along both side of the property when at an intersection. The site plan as approved does not hold the corner, but is set by and surrounded by parking.

3. There was no Community Design Process to resolve concerns with the project.

UPDC staff recognized the issues community members and the Land Use Committee were having with the project as proposed and at a public meeting, request that there be a Community Design Process for the site to ensure the site plan to facilitate needed input from the community. With the extreme objections as evidenced in letters, public meetings, and communication with the developers from the communities, the site plan should not be approved based on the simple truth that the surrounding neighborhoods, using evidence from their community and city plans, do not believe that this project is the best development for the site. As a result of the approval of the site plan, all of the work that residents, city staff, consultants, and elected officials have undergone through the adoption of planning documents would be disregarded.

The site is one of unique interest for all parties. Located within a quarter-mile and 5-minute walk to the Raymond Station, and a billion dollar historic development of CCLRT, the community is using its only option, our planning documents, to guide a better development for the site. UPDC only wants to ensure that TOD and community standards are adhered to so that this will be a positive first development in this historic time.

4. Zoning is not TN at the site

The I-1 zoning that is currently in effect is not in the best interest of the site, community, or central corridor. It may be considered spot zoning (or even "reverse spot zoning") that the site was not rezoned to TN during the Central Corridor Overlay Zoning District process and planned to be improved into a mixed-use development through the City's Comprehensive Plan. The site plan, if developed as is, would embody a minimal building that mirrors suburban style-development, instead of the urban village precedent the communities surrounding it are trying to establish.

Given that immediately north of the site has been zoned TN and that the neighborhood immediately south single-family home, and as it is on a north-south corridor of access for the Raymond Station and the CCLRT line, industrial zoning does not fit with the intent of all planning documents currently in effect for the site.

In fact, the project is yet speculative, as no tenants have been identified by the developer. UPDC considers the approval of site plan for this project to be completely inappropriate, in that it would

effectively create a sub-standard precedent for development in the area, allow city-adopted planning documents to be disregarded and uninformed development to proceed, and facilitate a precedent for developer-oriented spot zoning, which is extremely disconcerting for a site that has been identified by the City of St. Paul as a major site for redevelopment in accordance to the CCLRT project.

Conclusions

Failure of the City of St. Paul to designate the site as a Traditional Neighborhood zone was disappointing for the surrounding neighborhoods and an inadequate epitome for the future development of the area. However, absent the TN designation, this site plan falls far short of the spirit of the plans for the area and the basic needs of the neighborhood.

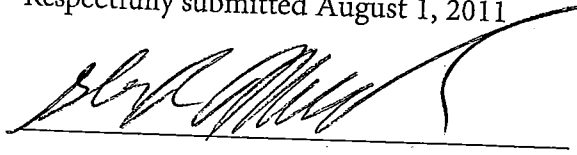
In light of this, we respectfully, but strongly request that the project and attendant site plan include the following conditions in conformance with the spirit and intent of any development of the site as envisioned in the St. Anthony Park Community Plan, Merriam Park Master Plan, Raymond Station Area Plan, Mississippi River Corridor Plan, Central Corridor Development Strategy, and City of St. Paul Comprehensive Plan:

- 1) **Buildings should hold the corners at Pelham and Wabash; there should not be more than 15 feet between the sidewalk and any building**
- 2) **Sidewalks should be installed on both Pelham and Wabash**
- 3) **Buildings should have façade articulation consistent with the historic district at Pelham and University**
- 4) **Any parking spaces should be behind the building or underground to reduce pervious pavement and encourage the use of public transportation, especially the CCLRT**
- 5) **There should be at least two occupied stories on any building at the site**
- 6) **Windows adjacent to the streets should be prominent and perpetuate a storefront**
- 7) **Doorways should be located close to street and emphasized architecturally**
- 8) **Incorporate artistic elements reflective of the Creative Enterprise artists**
- 9) **Increased building density**
- 10) **Mixed commercial and industrial use at the site**
- 11) **Design any building at the site to facilitate and encourage the growth and expansion of our local industry and buildings. First opportunity for tenants at the site should be local businesses looking to expand. Confirm tenants for the building prior to construction.**

For all the reasons cited above, the Union Park District Council requests the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul to reverse the approval of Site Plan 10-906716 for the project at 650 Pelham Boulevard and mandate inclusion of the above stated conditions for the development of this site.

Union Park District Council
1570 Concordia Ave, Suite LL100
St Paul, MN 55104

Respectfully submitted August 1, 2011

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Glen R. McCluskey', written over a horizontal line.

Glen R. McCluskey
President
Union Park District Council

CC: Russ Stark, Ward 4
John Allen, Industrial Equities
Jon Commers, St. Paul Planning Commission
Donna Drummond, Director of Planning
Amy Sparks, St. Anthony Park Community Council
Louis Jambois, St. Paul Port Authority

Defining Areas of Change and Stability

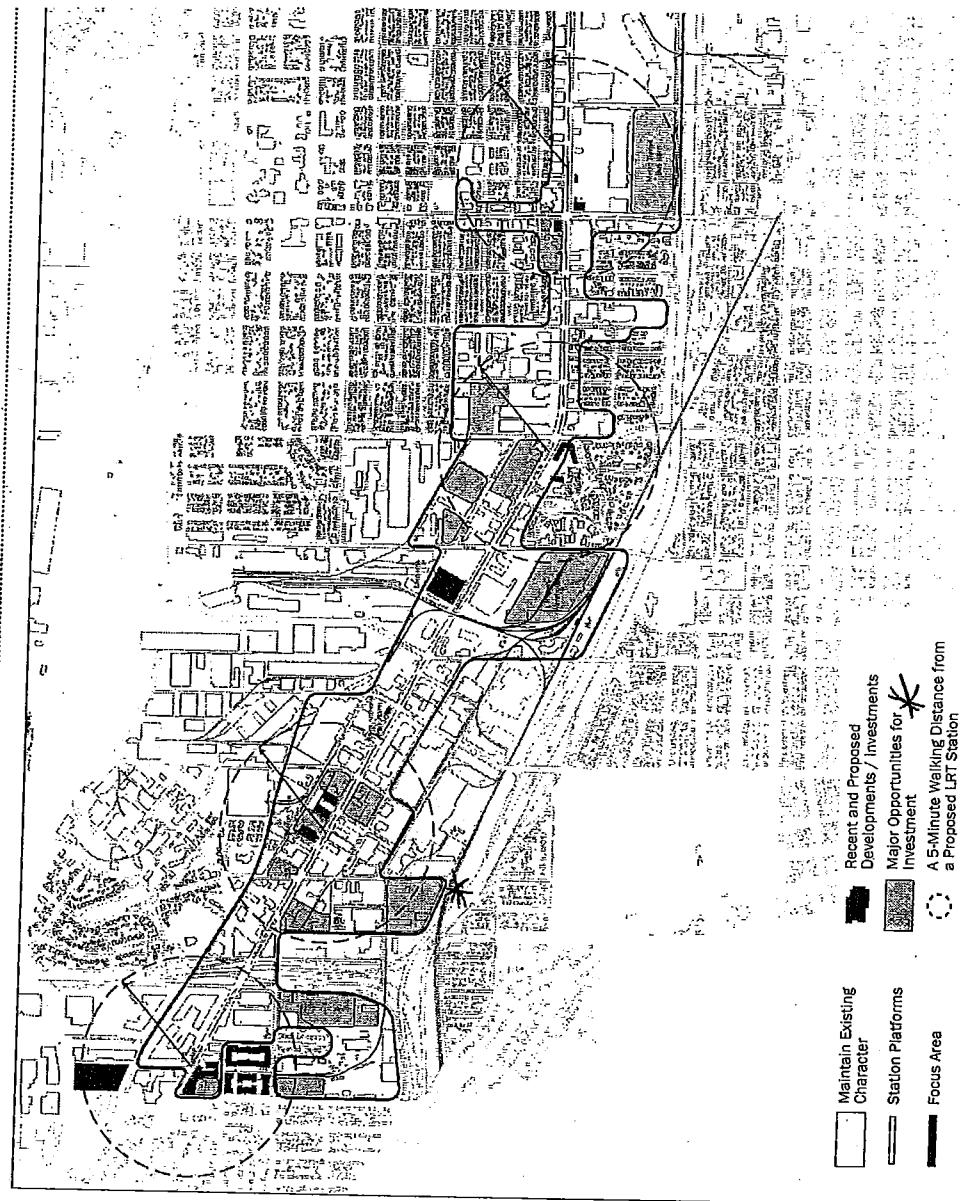
LRT has the potential to result in many positive changes along the Corridor. Identifying the potential for positive change and ways to manage this change is the primary aim of the Development Strategy.

Areas Likely To Change as a Result of LRT

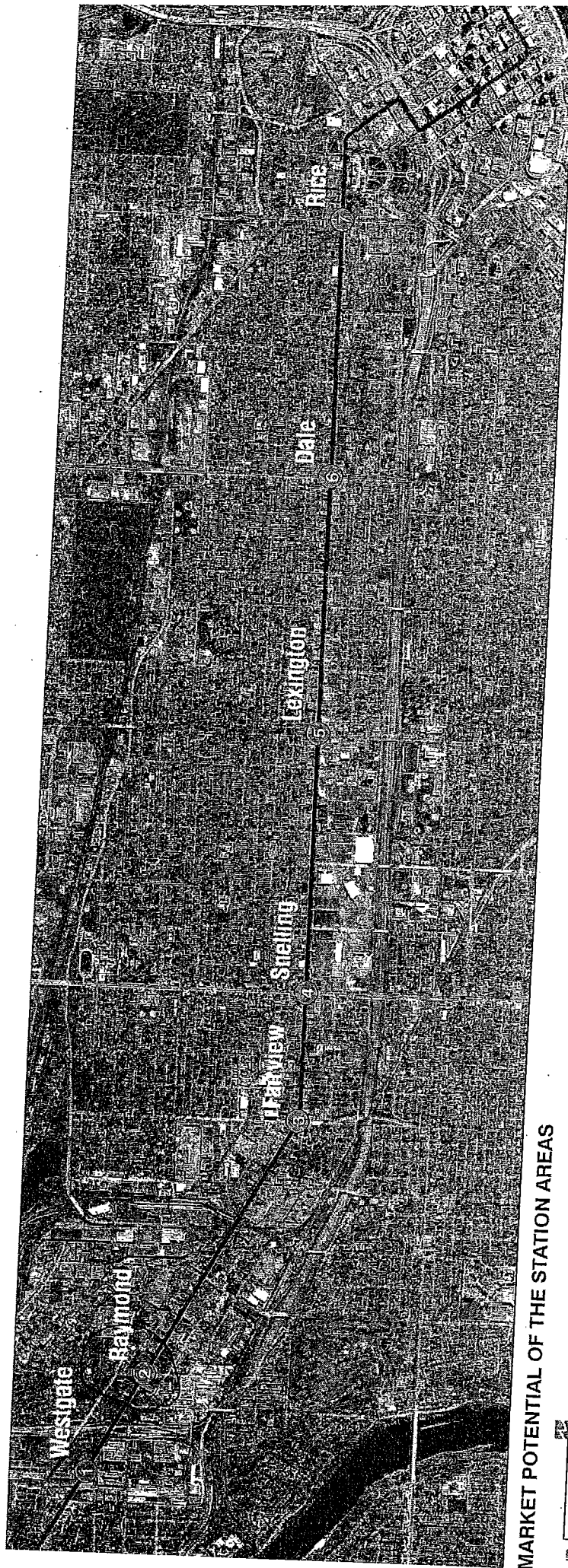
The Areas of Change and Stability diagram (right) outlines the area that will most likely be the focus of change as a result of the LRT (shown in white) and areas where the existing characteristics - whether low-rise residential or employment - are intended to be protected from change (shown in yellow).

In areas where the existing character should be maintained, very little change is proposed; emphasis should be on preserving and enhancing existing characteristics. This is the case even though some of these neighborhoods fall within a ¼-mile radius of a station traditionally considered for new transit-oriented development. Restoring and preserving these low-rise neighborhoods in their current form will help ensure that a stable population resides in the vicinity of LRT.

While most areas will experience gradual change over time, areas in pink highlight sites that may be entirely redeveloped over the next 20 years. The characteristics of these development sites vary significantly as will the form and scale of redevelopment. Over the following pages, six development typologies are presented to illustrate how development should respond to the range of existing conditions. For each type, a series of key principles is presented, along with an illustration of what development might look like.



Areas of Change and Stability

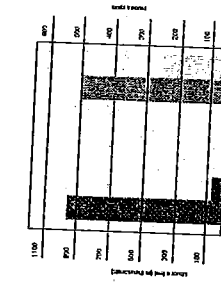


MARKET POTENTIAL OF THE STATION AREAS



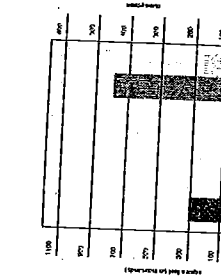
1: Westgate

OFFICE	700,000 sf
RETAIL	60,000 sf
INDUSTRIAL	none
HOTEL	150 rooms
RESID. (RENT)	1,500-2,000 units
RESID. (OWN)	300-500 units



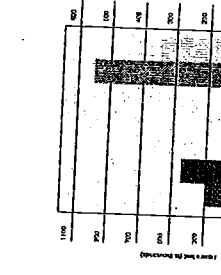
2: Raymond

OFFICE	950,000 sf
RETAIL	60,000 sf
INDUSTRIAL	none
HOTEL	none
RESID. (RENT)	450-600 units
RESID. (OWN)	250-500 units



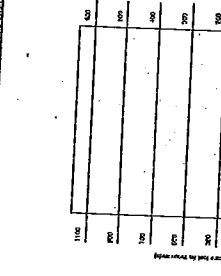
3: Fairview

OFFICE	300,000 sf
RETAIL	40,000 sf
INDUSTRIAL	none
HOTEL	none
RESID. (RENT)	400-500 units
RESID. (OWN)	200-300 units



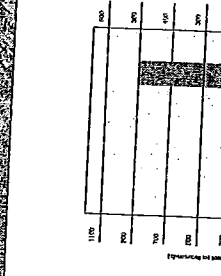
4: Snelling

OFFICE	300,000 sf
RETAIL	450,000 sf
INDUSTRIAL	none
HOTEL	150 rooms
RESID. (RENT)	500-500 units
RESID. (OWN)	300-400 units



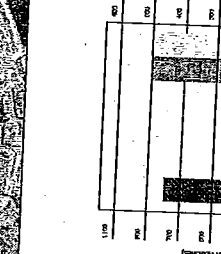
5: Lexington

OFFICE	250,000 sf
RETAIL	90,000 sf
INDUSTRIAL	none
HOTEL	none
RESID. (RENT)	200-250 units
RESID. (OWN)	75-150 units



6: Dale

OFFICE	50,000 sf
RETAIL	50,000 sf
INDUSTRIAL	none
HOTEL	none
RESID. (RENT)	400-500 units
RESID. (OWN)	50-100 units



7: Rice

OFFICE	800,000 sf
RETAIL	100,000 sf
INDUSTRIAL	none
HOTEL	200 rooms
RESID. (RENT)	500 units
RESID. (OWN)	500 units

prepared by U-PLAN community planning studio
www.u-plan.org

2030 MARKET POTENTIAL
from the Central Corridor Development Strategy
11.17.2009

OFFICE
HOTEL
RETAIL
RES. (RENT)
RES. (OWN)

INDUSTRIAL
RES. (OWN)



Union Park District Council
1570 Concordia Ave, Suite LL100
St Paul, MN 55104

STAFF RESPONSE IN BOLD INDENTED TEXT

August 1, 2011

Planning Commission of the City of St Paul
15 W Kellogg Blvd
St Paul, MN 55102

Re: Site Plan 10-906716

Appeal of Site Plan for Meridian Industrial Center at 650 Pelham Boulevard

The Union Park District Council (UPDC) appeals the staff approval to allow for construction of a 68,000 sq. ft. building at 650 Pelham Boulevard. Tom Beach, Zoning Specialist of the City of St Paul, approved this site plan on July 20, 2011.

The Union Park District Council has thoroughly reviewed the site plans as set forth in the staff-approved documents, explained by the Port Authority at a public meeting held by Union Park on June 27th, 2011, in relevant City zoning codes, and in subsequent meetings with City staff, Port Authority staff, and community representatives.

Based on this review, it is the position of the UPDC that the approval of this site plan is not soundly based in conjunction with city-approved planning documents for the site, nor in the best interest of the City of St. Paul or its residents. Because of this, the UPDC must conclude that the site plan will allow a single developer to gain economic advantage in developing this parcel while spreading adverse effects over the immediate neighborhood, the city, and its residents.

The Union Park District Council urges the Saint Paul Planning Commission to reverse the decision to approve the requested Site Plan #10-906716 for a development at Pelham and Wabash.

The following details our rationale for this appeal:

1. The site plan is not consistent with planning documents for the site.
2. The City Code encourages buildings to 'hold the corner' on sites at intersections.
3. There was no community design process to effectively resolve community concerns with the project.
4. The City Council did not zone the site TN as recommended in planning documents.

1. The Meridian Industrial Project Site Plan is not consistent with content in the following planning documents:

Union Park District Council
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St Paul, MN 55104

- St. Anthony Park Community District Plan
- Merriam Park Master Plan
- Central Corridor Development Strategy
- Raymond Station Area Plan
- St Paul Comprehensive Plan
- Mississippi River Corridor Plan
- West Midway Task Force

A. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the St Anthony Park Community Council District Plan

Land Use 4. Study potential locations to rezone around commercial and industrial areas to establish a gradual transition between land uses and building forms to assure compatibility of adjacent land uses and densities. Goal is to buffer single-family uses with more appropriate uses (multi-family) near commercial and industrial areas.

The Meridian Industrial Center is not an appropriate buffer between the single-family homes to the south and the transit-oriented development (TOD) to the north.

This area was studied as part of the CC/TN Zoning Study and City Council unanimously decided to have the 650 Pelham site remain I-1. I-94 buffers the site from the single-family homes to the south.

Design Standards. Institute commercial mixed-use design standards that reinforce human-scale buildings, promote sustainable design, promote quality in exterior materials and construction, reinforce a pedestrian oriented streetscape, promote green design, manage storm water retention, reduce impervious surfaces and visually screen surface parking.

The building's setback does not facilitate a pedestrian-oriented streetscape; neither does fencing. The building's entrance should be immediately off the curb and the façade should incorporate the historic nature of both the Desnoyer Park neighborhood and the Raymond/University historic zone.

The primary commercial mixed-use district in the city is the Traditional Neighborhood district. The 650 Pelham site is in an Industrial Zoning district and is subject to and meets the I-1 setback requirements and building standards, Sec. 63.110. A sidewalk with boulevard trees and pedestrian-scaled lighting will be built as part of the project. Surface parking will be screened from the public sidewalk with landscaping and architectural fencing. The site is not in a historic district, so historic design requirements cannot be applied to the site.

9. Conduct zoning study as part of the Raymond area station planning to evaluate rezoning the University-Raymond TOD district to TN districts to achieve standards and design that respect the area's historic quality, enhance its pedestrian accessibility, and encourage increased transit use.

The area was part of the Central Corridor overlay district, but 650 Pelham remained I1. This zoning allows the site, although it is in both the Area of Change for the Raymond Station and specified as a major site for redevelopment corridor-wide, with few restrictions.

The Area of Change was studied under the Central Corridor/Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Study for the purpose of recommending permanent zoning changes along the corridor to replace the interim Central Corridor Overlay zoning district. The 650 Pelham, included in the Central Corridor/Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Study, was determined by a unanimous City Council to remain I-1.

Streetscape Enhancement Plan. Develop and implement a long-term streetscape plan to achieve the economic development, livability, identity and transportation goals of the community.

The Meridian Industrial Center, as is, sets a minimal standard of development for the area. This project will facilitate other developments along Pelham and in the corridor to build to the developer's needs and not to the potential of the corridor. This project is underutilizing the site and scoffing hundreds of people's time and work visioning the future of the corridor.

10. Evaluate opportunities to create parkways with emphasis on trees, interconnections with parks, bike lanes and boulevard plantings where possible. Parkway should create new transportation and pedestrian connections, calm traffic, and create neighborhood identity.

The Wabash Commons, open space proposed for just north of the site, requires a better transitional building between the Desnoyer neighborhood and the open space. Pedestrians travel along Pelham for work, play, shopping, and transportation. Pelham is a corridor that connects CCLRT to Union Park's westernmost neighborhood, and being the only north-south connection between the Mississippi River and Cretin Ave, Pelham Blvd is essentially, and naturally, both a transportation and pedestrian connection that needs to be enhanced.

Pelham also serves as the route for the Midtown Greenway and is a current bicycle route for many traveling by the alternate means of transportation. The Meridian Industrial Center needs to better emphasize its location on the bike route and encourage more bike travel to and along Pelham.

11. Create gateways of architectural and landscape significance to announce entry into the neighborhood.

The St. Anthony Park Community Council's top priority for a new parkway is Raymond Avenue. This would include a realigned Raymond Avenue south of University to connect with Pelham Boulevard just north of Interstate 94.

Policies 10 and 11 are subsets of the 'Streetscape Enhancement Plan' which instructs St. Anthony Park to 'develop and implement a long-term streetscape plan to achieve the economic development, livability, identity, and transportation goals of the community.' There has been no adopted above standard streetscape plan at this location. The 650 Pelham project will build streetscape improvements including, a

new sidewalk, planted boulevard, street trees and the city standard lantern-style street light along Pelham Boulevard as part of the project. These improvements will enhance the north-south pedestrian connection as well as the regional bike route along Pelham Boulevard. The project's design does not preclude a future connection to a Midtown Greenway extension or the addition of a community gateway in the right-of-way at a future date.

The St Anthony Park community plans to realign a better connection between Pelham and Raymond, a development that will significantly improve Pelham Avenue and require better streetscape and transition into the station. The Meridian Industrial Center is proposed at a unique location, with a prominent neighborhood immediately south and a vibrant urban village just blocks north. The development should transition between the two, facilitating a sense of space and encourage pedestrian travel and an urban, not suburban design.

26. All new commercial and industrial developments requiring site plan approval should generally be designed to have at least the main entrance facade oriented to the street with access for pedestrians and bicyclists taking priority over vehicular access.

As communicated clearly to the developers, the communities surrounding the site want to have development. It has also been clearly communicated that any development needs to hold the corner at Pelham and Wabash.

Main entrances of the 650 Pelham project are oriented toward the street. A sidewalk with boulevard trees and pedestrian-scaled lighting and direct pedestrian connections from the public sidewalk to the main entrances will be built as part of the project. Sec. 63.110 states, "In pedestrian-oriented commercial districts characterized by storefront commercial buildings built up to the public sidewalk, new principal structures shall have a maximum setback of fifteen (15) feet from a commercial front lot line. At intersections, buildings shall "hold the corner," that is, have street facades within fifteen (15) feet of the lot line along both streets, or the site plan shall have vertical structural elements that "hold the corner." A primary entrance shall face a primary abutting public street." This site on Pelham is not in a "pedestrian-oriented commercial districts characterized by storefront commercial buildings built up to the public sidewalk." Therefore the project is consistent with the required conditions and is not required to "hold the corner."

B. The Meridian Industrial Center does not conform to standards in the Merriam Park Community Master Plan (adopted by the City Council as an Addendum to the City of St. Paul's Comprehensive Plan 4 Feb 2004)

The intent of the Merriam Park Community Plan was to continue to develop the Merriam Park neighborhood into an urban village. Strong single-family homes and engaged neighbors helped to create a plan that would better reflect and guide the future of the area.

Union Park District Council
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St Paul, MN 55104

2. Major new development should be mixed-use and located along transit routes or on underused or inappropriately developed sites

The Meridian Industrial Center does not follow these guidelines, set forth to better facilitate the transition close to residential neighborhoods.

15. Merriam Park should be a friendly, encouraging place for small to medium-sized businesses to grow. Expansion of existing businesses will be favored over the establishment of new businesses, particularly those that would have a negative impact on the community because of congestion, character, or use.

The expansion of local business to the site should have priority.

21. This plan supports the St. Paul Land Use Plan's definition of green spaces, parks, and the river as urban amenities. Green spaces and corridors should be encouraged in the community wherever possible, such as along railroad tracks and roads.

The Merriam Park Master Plan encourages green space along rail tracks, and this site has excellent potential with its location situated between a current neighborhood and proposed green space at Wabash Commons.

24. The community supports initiatives that promote biking, biking, and other means of transportation as alternatives to single-occupant vehicles. Bike lanes, and bikes racks in commercial areas and on buses should be added. Connecting St. Paul to the Midtown Greenway in Minneapolis is supported when feasible.

The developer needs to acknowledge and incorporate the future Midtown Greenway and the intrinsic connection this site has to that project.

In response to Section B pertaining to Merriam Park Community Plan, The location of the 650 Pelham site does not fall within the boundaries of Merriam Park Community Plan (now Union Park) and therefore, cannot be required to adhere to the standards of the Merriam Park Community Plan.

The Site Plan does not conform to expectations of the Desnoyer neighborhood.

The Desnoyer Park Improvement Association believes that the project design is not keeping with its urban neighborhood, and may sit empty without tenants after construction. It is not a long-term development, but merely a hasty development that is not reflective of the neighborhood's needs. The land is immediately across a walking bridge from homes and the fact that it is so close to a main artery of the Central Corridor requires more thought and community input. A UPDC community meeting residents spoke to their concerns for the project, which were not addressed and remain.

The 650 Pelham site does not lie within the Desnoyer Park Improvement Association boundaries, which, according to the Desnoyer Park Improvement Association website, extends north only to I-94.

C. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the Central Corridor Development Strategy (adopted by City Council in 2007)

Outlining how the Central Corridor should be developed, the CC Development Strategy describes the vision and a set of strategies for how the Central Corridor should grow and change in response to the investment in LRT. The six principles in the strategy, guiding the preparation of plans for each of the transit station areas, are:

- *Reposition Saint Paul in the region.*
- *Benefit and strengthen the diverse community along the Central Corridor.*
- *Link and foster economic activity.*
- *Improve people's mobility throughout their community.*
- *Improve the image and quality of life along the Central Corridor.*
- *Collaborate from design to operation.*

The Meridian Industrial project does not incorporate and place-making features that will strengthen the community along CCLRT, nor

The principles cited do not refer to or define "place-making features." The 650 Pelham project provides a new location for businesses in Saint Paul. The project will provide employment opportunities in close proximity to the Central Corridor. The future businesses at the site will foster economic activity. Streetscape enhancements built as part of the project will provide infrastructure for improved mobility. These streetscape improvements will improve the image of the public realm.

3.2 Site has been identified as a Major Opportunity for Development within the area of change. There is heightened potential for the future development at the site.

The map indicates that at the Major Opportunities for Investment, "the characteristics of these development sites will vary as will the form and scale of redevelopment." The site plan meets the requirements of the plan.

3.3 Towards a Transit-Supportive Corridor Making Development "Fit"

- *Design new development to provide a transition in scale and ensure it fits into its surroundings, improves existing street conditions, and integrates well with existing neighborhoods and communities.*
- *Achieve minimum ground level floor-to-ceiling heights of 13' along major streets such as the Avenue and at important intersections.*
- *Fill gaps in the street with new buildings or by grouping buildings to create walkable clusters of activity that will animate the public realm.*

The Meridian project does not fit with the surrounding buildings; Pelham has a variety of uses, and many building are built up to the curb. Also, none of the surrounding neighborhoods

approve this development as one that will better the community, but rather set a sub-par standard of development for the area.

Pelham Boulevard has a variety of setbacks along the street. The setbacks in the site plan are consistent and conform with the existing zoning. Ground floor ceiling heights are greater than 13 feet. The 650 Pelham site provides a transition from the more intensive industrial I-2 use to the east to the I-1 zoned parcel immediately to the west across Pelham Boulevard. The site also improves north-south connectivity between the Desnoyer Park and the station area by building pedestrian streetscape improvements along Pelham Boulevard as part of the project.

Transit-Supportive Land Uses & Densities

- *Promote a mix of transit-supportive uses, such as medium-to-high density residential, small-format retail, restaurants and institutions.*
- *Provide a range of housing types and sizes that will cater to both new and existing members of the community.*
- *Animate the street by positioning entrances to individual units at grade and by locating active uses such as restaurants and retail on the ground floor.*

There needs to be an active connection to Pelham, and attractive first floor tenants.

There are several direct pedestrian connections from entrances facing Pelham Boulevard to the sidewalk, which will be built as part of the project.

Transit-Supportive Access, Circulation & Parking

- *Locate parking so that it does not detract from the image of the area by placing it internal to the block, within parking ramps, inside buildings or below ground.*
- *Seek opportunities to consolidate parking, access and servicing.*
- *Seek to develop balanced and coordinated networks of movement that allow for a mix of pedestrian, bicycle, LRT, bus, and vehicular circulation.*

The parking for the current project detract from the design of the building and draws attention away from the street. There is no consolidation of parking and a lack of focus on CCLRT transportation, biking and walking.

The parking configuration in the site plan is allowed under the existing zoning. Parking access is consolidated to one curb-cut each on Pelham Boulevard and Wabash Avenue. Parking will likely be shared among multiple tenants and will be screened from the public right-of-way with landscaping and architectural fencing. The site plan improves pedestrian access and bicycle access to and through the site, by building streetscape improvements including a sidewalk and providing bicycle parking as part of the project.

A Green, Attractive & Connected Pedestrian Environment

- *Design open spaces as a focus for new development and work towards improving pedestrian amenities along the Corridor, especially adjacent to stations.*
- *Extend existing streets, open spaces and open space linkages to strengthen connections with the surrounding community*

There needs to be planned connectivity to the future Wabash Commons.

The future location of Wabash Commons is not known. The Raymond Station Area Plan states, "While the eventual location and configuration of these spaces may be different than the images presented here..." When Wabash Commons is created and/or Wabash Avenue is redeveloped there will be opportunity to improve connectivity. The 650 Pelham project will improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and add green space along Pelham Boulevard.

In addition, the outlined Market Potential of the Station Area outlines that by 2030 there will be no industrial in the Raymond station area. This proposed project would far outlast that projection if built, deviating from the desired use at the station area. (Image attached)

These are estimates based on the best information available at the time the plans were written. They are not a mandate for what will be developed over time. Figure 2.2 of the Raymond Station Area Plan indicates that existing industrial uses will be "preserved/redeveloped." The 650 Pelham project could include office space, which was estimated at a demand of 100,000 square feet by 2014.

D. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the Raymond Station Area Plan

The Raymond area is historically St. Paul's largest industrial district. The properties are typically one to seven-story brick and stone structures that originally housed factories, warehouses, offices, and commercial spaces.

2.3 Defining the Study Area

The Raymond Station Area has potential to evolve as a place with more employment, a greater range of businesses, more vibrant neighborhoods, and new and enhanced beautiful public spaces. The station area plan process used four mapping layers to investigate and understand the Raymond Station Area. The station area boundary extends east of the ¼ mile zone to capture larger potential development parcels located along Vandalia, and farther west and south to include a number of underutilized, sites with excellent access and frontage relative to Highway 280 and Interstate 94. This boundary is the primary focus for all recommendations contained within this document.

Within the boundary, a refined Area of Change has been delineated through the station area planning process. The Area of Change denotes the parcels where change is welcome and should be encouraged, whether through gradual infill, intensification or comprehensive redevelopment.

The Area of Change was developed as part of the Central Corridor Development Strategy planning process and was the basis for the Central Corridor Overlay zoning district. The Central Corridor Overlay was an interim ordinance that was put in place until permanent zoning changes could be studied and made in accordance with adopted policy. The Raymond Station Area Plan, developed after the Central Corridor Overlay, identified the Station Area Planning Boundary in which station area plan policies apply. The 650 Pelham project site is outside of Raymond Station Area Planning Boundary as shown on Figure 2.3 of the Raymond Station Area Plan. The Area of Change was then studied under the Central Corridor/Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Study for the purpose of recommending permanent zoning changes along the corridor. The site was included in the Central Corridor/Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Study and was determined by City Council to remain I-1.

2.4 Looking Ahead – the Raymond Station Area in 2030

Looking Ahead describes a community-crafted vision for the future of the Raymond Station Area. This narrative generally describes the sum of desired characteristics for this community, and its future role within the broader Central Corridor. The Raymond Station Area will successfully accommodate new forms of residential and commercial infill, while preserving and strengthening both the historic character of the area and the integrity of its employment uses. The potential for a new employment district is identified adjacent to the confluence of Highway 280 and Interstate 94, where excellent access and visibility create a strong economic development opportunity. New development within the Station Area will reflect the architectural scale and character of existing historic buildings, to strengthen this emerging urban village.

This is long-term policy guidance defining desired conditions 20 years in the future. The 650 Pelham project will contribute to the vision by adding employment uses and increasing connectivity to neighborhoods.

Raymond Station Area Vision:

A model mixed-use urban village that successfully combines new and old: buildings, streets, land uses, and modes of transportation. This Station Area will evolve with an authenticity and sense of place that distinguishes it within the Corridor, and becomes a must-see district for visitors seeking to discover the places that make Saint Paul unique.

This is a 20-year vision that recognizes the Station Area will have a variety of land uses. The 650 Pelham site is outside the Station Area Planning Boundary.

FIGURE 3.3 - Wabash Commons is a focal point for the larger bicycle and pedestrian movement network and the new redevelopment parcels surrounding it.

Wabash Commons: A significant public space is proposed along the north side of Wabash to create a focal point for a future employment hub south of the Avenue. Similar to its proposed sister 'Commons' in the Westgate Station Area, the Wabash Commons is intended to be a high-quality space, enhancing the place making and real estate value for adjacent office and employment uses. Its size will support both active and passive uses.

☐ Wabash Commons, Myrtle Hinge, Top of the Village Park and Charles Street park network offer opportunities to explore and illuminate the history and promise of the Raymond Area through interactive installations and interpretive walkways.

In regard to Wabash Commons, the Raymond Station Area Plan states, "While the eventual location and configuration of these spaces may be different than the images presented here, developers, city departments and other stakeholders should strive to achieve the general intent and purpose of the *Key Moves* described below. These conceptual Moves will require a range of implementation measures - from allocation of municipal capital improvements budgets to private investment and parkland dedication and/or acquisition - determined on a site-by-site basis as development occurs." It is unclear at this time the future exact location of Wabash Commons. As stated above, it will depend upon several conditions and opportunities. The 650 Pelham project actively supports a future Wabash Commons by contributing to the City's Parkland Dedication Fund.

☐ Pelham University Gateway: a left over space, offers opportunity to mark and celebrate the entrance to the Raymond Station Area. While public art opportunities are broadly available to national and even international artists, special efforts should be made to engage local artists.

This policy does not apply to the site. Pelham University Gateway is identified as being in the right-of-way in the University/Pelham intersection and not in proximity to the proposed project.

In this burgeoning arts district, there are opportunities for private property owners to engage artists as they envision their overall developments and holdings and to commission public art, particularly where private property intersects the public right-of-way.

This text identifies an opportunity, but not a requirement that can be imposed on private property owners.

Future investment in Raymond's Station Area must build on and strengthen the qualities of the University-Raymond Commercial Historic District. Preserving the integrity and character of the area's defining architectural history will be vital to the continued success of land use and development in the Raymond Station Area. Nothing in this plan should be deemed to contradict the University-Raymond Commercial Historic District Design Review Guidelines, but should instead reinforce, and be read in conjunction with, this important legislative document. Also,

important to the long term economic and social health of the area is the preservation of viable employment uses with a long term economic future, while continuing to promote new and diverse residential and employment uses that are transit-supportive. The Raymond Station Area requires a flexible and permissive land use strategy that emphasizes connectivity, design performance and transit-supportive qualities, including a broad mix of uses, flexibility of regulation over time, active first level uses, and shared parking solutions. Together, these approaches will assist to strengthen and repair the area's "Main Street" quality, and reinforce the fabric of the area as a complete community with housing, employment and movement options for all.

While this overall direction will help guide change over the entire Raymond Station Area, this section describes four distinct Character Areas that will require specific policy direction to achieve their built form and land use potential over time. The following Character Areas descriptions and policy directions provide clear guidance to the forms of development and investment that will support the future of the broader station area.

This text introduces the Character Areas and makes it clear that, "*The Raymond Station Area requires a flexible and permissive land use strategy.*" The Station Area Plan is not meant to be absolutely prescriptive.

4.1 Raymond Historic Village

The Raymond Historic Village will be a model of a vibrant commercial corridor that supports people living and working in a revitalized historic district. The University-Raymond Commercial Historic District, designated by the Saint Paul City Council in 2005, developed in the early 20th century (1891-1941) as the city's largest industrial area and a national transportation center. Nearly all of the properties in the district are related to some aspect of the activities of the Minnesota Transfer Railway, or the early years of the trucking industry. The district's 22 contributing buildings, most of them with high exterior integrity, reflect the evolution of the area from the railroad era to the interstate highway system era. A set of design review guidelines was adopted by the City Council when the district was designated. They are used by the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) to review permits for rehabilitation, restoration, new construction and demolition. The guidelines address masonry and walls, windows and doors, signs and accessories, new construction, non-contributing and contemporary buildings, and demolition. Any proposed development within the historic district boundaries will need to comply with the HPC's guidelines, as well as the key moves and policy directions in the Raymond Station Area Plan. The adaptive re-use of existing historic and employment buildings, and the sensitive construction of infill uses, will combine a range of residential, commercial, employment and cultural uses while maintaining and strengthening the scale and character of the existing village. Pedestrian-scaled streets will connect the main spine of the Avenue north and south to a wealth of employment anchors and stable residential communities. The LRT platform will effectively extend the village qualities of the Avenue east to Carleton. Though the Raymond village is primarily focused along University Avenue, larger full-

block development parcels will exhibit a relationship and secondary orientation to inner blocks where employment uses are located.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, (see Figure 4.1) so this section of the Raymond Station Area Plan is not relevant to this site plan.

4.1.1 Built Form-New development should fit with its surroundings.

a) New development along University Avenue should be 2 to 6 residential stories in height with transitions that respect the existing scale and character of the historic buildings along the street. The northeast corner exhibits potential for taller building heights, and could reach 6-8 stories if setback from the intersection on a 3-4 story podium-type building.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

b) New development should ensure that buildings have strong street presence along University, Charles and Myrtle. Buildings along Myrtle and Charles may step down to two stories.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

c) New development should be sited to ensure an adequate public realm and pedestrian promenade.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

d) New buildings on corner sites should front both streets and utilize their corner positioning as a distinctive feature in their design similar to the Specialty Building.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

e) Building design should incorporate materials and an architectural style that is distinguishable as contemporary, yet compatible with adjacent historic buildings through scale, rhythm, color and materials, while meeting the University-Raymond Commercial Historic District Design Guidelines. All new development should promote transparency and activity at street level.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

f) First floor commercial or retail uses should help to animate the street by incorporating large glass frontages that allow the activity within to be seen from the street and have at least one entrance that is oriented towards Raymond or University Avenue, access points to the station platforms, and/or key gathering places.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

g) Commercial or retail uses should be located in the first floor of all buildings within the Priority Active Frontage zones identified on page 25.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

4.1.2 Land Use & Development Pattern

Urban Infill along the Avenue should have many uses.

a) A broad mix of uses should be concentrated along the edges of the Avenue where they provide an easy connection to public transit, and benefit from the visibility and profile of being located on a major transportation corridor.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

b) Live-work units may be permitted on the first floor of all buildings beyond the Priority Active Frontage areas. All new private development must contribute to adjacent streetscape improvements.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

g) As development occurs, seek opportunities to increase north/south mid block connections such as the one created at Carleton Lofts.

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

h) All streets should provide sidewalks, adequate lighting and streetscape amenity.

The University-Raymond Commercial Historic District outlined above is comprised of numerous contributing buildings, many of which are 1-2 stories in height. New development should respect the scale and character of the existing buildings while filling in the gaps to intensify the district...

The 650 Pelham project is outside of the Raymond Historic Area Future Character Area, see Figure 4.1.

4.2 A Prestige Employment District

The accessibility and centrality ... [and] highly visible and accessible frontage would be ideal for a linear corporate campus for large corporate office buildings or a series of multi-tenanted research park, laboratory and office buildings. These attributes may also make the area attractive for a new hotel and conference center catering to downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul, the University of Minnesota, and/or the general Twin Cities Region market...

The 650 Pelham project is within the Prestige Employment District Boundary. This language describes the types of land uses that could be suitable to locate within this District over the course of the next 20 years. It is within every property owners right to develop within in a manner that conforms to the zoning code. This language is not meant to be limiting. The plan states, "*The Raymond Station Area requires a flexible and permissive land use strategy.*"

4.2.1 Built Form

c) Further east and toward the center of the Station Area, buildings should step down to a maximum height of 6-8 stories around the proposed Wabash Commons.

The 950 Pelham site is outside of the Station Area Boundary. This policy gives guidance on height maximums. The proposed building is within the maximums.

d) Full-block, large floorplate commercial developments should be permitted.

This type of floorplate is permitted, but not required.

e) New development should exhibit a strong relationship to both the Cromwell frontage and Wabash Commons to ensure there are no backlotting conditions on either of these important spaces. Commercial uses should be principally oriented towards Cromwell Avenue. Buildings adjacent to the Commons should have direct access to it.

Building density and size at the site should reflect the potential of the corridor and the possibility of higher job density.

The proposed project will not have its back to Wabash or Cromwell. The density of the proposed project is allowed in the I-1 zoning district.

4.5 Managed Parking Strategies...To properly assess and manage Park & Ride and Hide & Ride, comprehensive strategies must be implemented so that remaining on- and off-street parking can best serve residents and businesses in the corridor, and support walkable, transit-oriented

neighborhoods. Clearly, the reliance on surface parking at current development standards is a large contributor to the underutilization of land within the Station Area. A transformation from surface parking to structured and underground parking will need to happen over time and in conjunction with new development. The following policies provide the direction to facilitate this transformation that will be critical to the creation of active and vibrant streets within the Raymond Station Area.

There is a huge possibility that there will be park & hide activity with the too-large and under utilized parking lot planned for the Meridian Industrial Center.

The possibility of park and hide is a property management issue and cannot be regulated through site plan or zoning. The amount of parking proposed is allowed under the zoning code.

a) The establishment of new single-use surface parking lots on University Avenue, and the expansion of existing lots within the station areas, should be discouraged.

The lot will be shared among future tenants and is not on University Avenue. This is not an expansion of an exiting lot and it is out side of the Station Area Boundary. There will be less parking area than the previous use.

b) Major redevelopment sites should be explored for opportunities to create shared, structured or below grade parking.

This site will have shared parking among future tenants.

c) Where surface parking occurs along University Avenue this should occur to the side or behind buildings and be limited to a maximum of 60-feet in width (for the provision of 2 parking aisles and one drive aisle) and should utilize landscape buffers to minimize the impact on the pedestrian environment.

This site is not along University Avenue.

d) Parking requirements should be reduced or eliminated to reduce development costs, support transit ridership and open new possibilities for flexible live-work spaces on smaller sites where on-site parking is not available.

There should be the least amount possible of new parking created along the CCLRT, especially in the station areas. 200 spaces of parking for the proposed building is superfluous.

Parking proposed at the site is within the parking maximum allowed in the Zoning Code based on the projected uses by the applicant.

5.1 Connections

The goal of this section is to identify improved movement options for pedestrians, transit riders and cyclists in reaching the Raymond Station Area from adjacent neighborhoods and the broader Corridor. The Connections diagram (Figure 5.1) identifies key routes to and within the Raymond Station Area, and illustrates recommendations for improving the connectivity, safety, efficiency and quality of these routes for pedestrians and cyclists, including...Midtown Greenway Connection- The long-term feasibility of reconciling grade difference between Pelham Boulevard and the future Midtown Greenway bike route should be explored.

Both Pelham and Wabash are identified in the plan as bike routes. This classification requires the explicit attention to the Greenway development and reflective development along the routes.

The 650 Pelham project will provide a new sidewalk, street trees and pedestrian scaled lighting along Pelham improving pedestrian and bicycle connectivity. The active rail spur along the south side of Wabash prohibits a sidewalk at this time for pedestrian safety. The project does not prohibit the long-term feasibility to a Midtown Greenway Connection. This connection will likely be on the Mn/DOT right-of-way south of the property.

E. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the City of St Paul Comprehensive Plan

Implementation

[The plan aims to] capitalize on the potential of the Central Corridor. The construction of light rail transit in the Central Corridor provides opportunities for the city to realize its potential as a complex, sophisticated urban center with denser housing and employment centers.... Cultural and historic resources enhance the lives of Saint Paul residents and visitors by defining the character of the city and creating a strong link to its rich past. Protecting these resources through the use of historic preservation tools will minimize such threats as lack of maintenance, development pressures, and challenges to finding appropriate uses for contemporary times.

Land Use section of the City of St Paul Comprehensive Plan

Land Use

[This is a] Mixed-Use Corridor. This land use consists primary of thoroughfares through the city that are served by public transit (or could be in the future). Mixed-Use Corridors include areas where two or more of the following uses are or could be located: residential, commercial, retail, office, small scale industry, institutional, and open space uses. The uses in these corridors may be within a building or in buildings that are in close proximity to each other. Mixed-Use Corridors includes Neighborhood Centers, which are compact, mixed-use areas of higher density housing, as well as shopping, community amenities, and employment centers. The Central Corridor, one specific Mixed-Use Corridor, is the major transit corridor connecting Saint Paul with the University of Minnesota and Downtown Minneapolis.

The building as proposed lends itself to having more than one use permitted in the I-1 zoning district.

Provide Land for Jobs - For Saint Paul to have a strong economy and to thrive, it must have businesses with living wage jobs. The strategy focuses on providing land for employment centers that capitalize on Saint Paul's historic strengths and emerging labor markets...

The site will have new office and warehouse space for businesses.

Promote Aesthetics and Development Standards - As Saint Paul continues to revitalize itself and to grow, it must be an attractive place to live, work, and visit. This strategy provides a framework for design and aesthetics that will engage people and help integrate the built environment into the community.

The project is subject to and meets the general design requirements, Sec. 63.110 of the Zoning Code.

2.1 Ensure the availability of sufficient quantities of land suitable for existing and new employment centers; prepare an inventory of properties zoned for industrial and commercial uses that have the potential for redevelopment as employment centers.

An inventory of vacant and underutilized buildings and land currently zoned for industrial and commercial use will provide the City and its development partners with baseline information necessary to pursue a program to develop employment centers.

The use of industrial land in this area is currently being studied as part of the West Midway Industrial Study. The Saint Paul Port Authority testified to have the 650 Pelham site remain zoned I-1 before the Planning Commission during the public hearing for the CC/TN Zoning Study. The Planning Commission recommended and the City Council unanimously agreed that I-1 zoning should remain at this location.

2.2 Promote the redevelopment of outmoded and non-productive sites and buildings so they can sustain existing industries and attract emerging

The 650 Pelham project will redevelop a site previously used for semi trailer storage to provide new office and warehouse space for businesses.

2.3 Attract industries that use best management practices regarding environmental issues (e.g., air and water quality, soil contamination, solid waste, sustainable construction practices, etc.) in their site development and operations.

We would like to see state of that art development at the site, especially due to its identified potential for redevelopment.

This policy is encouraging the business or industry itself to use best management practices as they relate to development of the site and ongoing operations. There is no indication at this time that the proposed development/developer will not be consistent with this goal.

2.15 Redevelop underutilized or vacant land in railroad corridors. [end policy statement] There has been significant redevelopment in the Phalen Corridor and the Great Northern Corridor in the last two decades. Ample acreage is available for light industry, commercial office development, and capitalization on the growth of freight rail. [end associated description]

As is consistent with the current zoning regulations, this site will be home to a light industrial or commercial office development. The redevelopment of this site is in keeping with the stated policy goal.

*2.16 Prepare a study of the West Midway industrial area outside the line of change as identified in the **Central Corridor Development Strategy** to determine how the industrial area may be best used to strengthen Saint Paul's industrial sector and employment base (see Figure LU-G).*

The West Midway, one of Saint Paul's historic railroad corridors, is strategically located, with much of its current business activity closely tied to the railroad lines that run through it. Many existing businesses, though successful, do not employ large numbers of people. The study, in part, will focus on how the West Midway can evolve to capture "knowledge-based" business activity and to take advantage of the potential for a jobs/housing match because of its proximity to the Central Corridor.

The West Midway Study is still underway and recommendations have yet to be made.

Land Assembly 2.23 Establish site plan review standards for the I1, I2, and I3 districts for the purposes of providing for the efficient use of land and enhancing the aesthetic quality of the district. [end policy statement] TN development standards incorporated into the IR district enhance the appearance and functionality of an industrial development so the district is compatible with nearby commercial and residential areas. Efficient use of a parcel will yield greater numbers of jobs for each acre of development than inefficient use. [end associated description]

More than 68 jobs should be required for the site, especially due to its proximity to residential areas.

The number of jobs on a given parcel or in a particular development is not tied to the site plan review process. There are no zoning code requirements that regulate numbers of jobs. It is the understanding of staff that the project will meet the Saint Paul Port Authority's criteria relative to the number of jobs.

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3.2 Prepare design standards that provide a transition between single-family houses and nearby taller buildings. [end policy statement] *Issues that the design standards should address include, but are not limited to, height, mass, scale, and architectural context. Taller buildings might be located in Neighborhood Centers or Mixed-Use Corridors, at the edges where they abut single-family neighborhoods.* [end associated description]

This passage clearly identifies what the UPDC is seeking for this project.

This does not apply as the site is neither adjacent to single family homes nor is the proposed building "tall."

3.6 Encourage improvement of safety through design, as outlined in Design for Public Safety. [end policy statement] *Design for Public Safety incorporates the principles of crime prevention through environmental design, to focus on strategies and techniques for the design of the physical environment, both of sites and buildings, which help reduce opportunities for crime (see Policy PR-1.7).* [end associated description]

Transit-Oriented Development and Pedestrian-Oriented development can be synonymous.

It was determined during the site plan review process that there were no crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) issues.

3.15 Support the development of guidelines to incorporate public art in City financed capital projects and larger redevelopment efforts to imbue these projects with a distinct sense of place; provide for their maintenance. [end policy statement] *Projects include infrastructure, buildings, and landscape and exclude projects that are below ground. The City should involve artists early in the planning and design of capital projects.* [end associated description]

The Port Authority's involvement in this project should encourage the incorporation of public art or artistic elements.

This particular project is not a City-financed capital project; therefore the inclusion of public art will be at the discretion of the land or building owner.

3.16 Facilitate collaboration between artists and the community to identify opportunities for public art and to discuss civic issues that may inform the artist's work.

This is an over-arching policy goal and does not translate to a public artist being involved in all development proposals.

St Anthony has been identified as a Neighborhood Center by the City of St Paul.

1.11 Designate area as Neighborhood Centers [end policy statement]. *Neighborhood Centers evolved as Saint Paul grew through the years. They all have an existing development pattern conducive to supporting a denser, mixed-use, pedestrian environment where commerce, employment, and amenities can be efficiently and effectively provided. Existing Neighborhood*

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Centers are not all developed at the same level of intensity. Moreover, some existing Neighborhood Centers, such as Saint Anthony, are expected to have modest growth...

Saint Anthony has been designated as a Neighborhood Center. The description of a Neighborhood Center, however, is applicable to the Raymond and University area where there is a convergence of commerce, employment and amenities. The site is not consistent with the description of Neighborhood Centers.

1.12 Balance the following objectives for Neighborhood Centers through the density and scale of development: accommodating growth, supporting transit use and walking, providing a range of housing types, providing housing at densities that support transit, and providing open space and recreational opportunities. [end of policy statement] There can be gradations of density within individual Neighborhood Centers, with denser developments at the core and less dense developments at the periphery. [end of associated description]

The site in question is outside of the Neighborhood Center node shown on the map on page 4 of the Land Use Chapter. Therefore this policy does not apply.

1.13 Establish boundaries for Neighborhood Centers that reflect existing development patterns and functional characteristics of the area. [end of policy statement] The City should use these boundaries to guide development activity, monitor growth and other development conditions, and evaluate performance toward meeting objectives for services and community amenities. [end of associated description]

Boundaries for Neighborhood Centers have not been identified on a citywide basis. Any boundary identified in an adopted plan document does not encompass the property at 650 Pelham.

1.14 Plan for growth in Neighborhood Centers. [end of policy statement] The City should recognize community circumstances and preferences as stated in City adopted summaries of small area plans and district plans, while still providing additional housing opportunities at densities that support transit and walking.

As outlined above, the City should acknowledge the planning documents for the area and ensure that the intent of those plans be enacted.

The city ensures consistency with adopted plan document through the site plan review process. No adopted policy document made specific reference to this site or the surrounding industrial and commercial parcels.

1.15 Promote Neighborhood Centers as compact, mixed-use communities that provide services and employment close to residences. [end of policy statement] Mixed-use development combines three or more uses (e.g., residential, retail, office, recreation, etc.) into an integrated, pedestrian oriented real estate project that is served by transit. Whether the components of the

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project are within a building or in buildings that are in close proximity to each other, they are functionally integrated so that use of space is maximized. Some of the benefits of mixed-use are activating urban areas during more hours of the day, increasing housing options, reducing auto dependence, and creating a sense of place. [end of associated description]

The proposed development meets applicable zoning code standards and is not required to be a mixed use project.

1.18 Provide connections for bicycles and pedestrians to community facilities (e.g., parks, recreation centers, libraries, etc.) and to activities that support the residential population; and to adjacent areas of the city.

Pelham Blvd is a direct route to Desnoyer Park and the Town and Country Club.

The statement that Pelham Boulevard is a direct route to Desnoyer Park and the Town and Country Club is accurate. Pelham is also slated to become a link in the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway system with appropriate signage and markings. The developer of 650 Pelham will be providing a link in the sidewalk system in an area that is currently lacking good pedestrian connections.

1.27 Provide connections by bicycle and pedestrian facilities to adjacent areas.

Pelham is slated to become a link in the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway system with appropriate signage and markings. The developer of 650 Pelham will be providing a link in the sidewalk system in an area that is currently lacking good pedestrian connections.

Historic Preservation section of the St Paul Comprehensive Plan

Neighborhood Character

6.1. Determine the character-defining features of each neighborhood that should be preserved; incorporate these features into area plans and master plans for new development.

New development at 650 Pelham should be based on the historic Desnoyer Park neighborhood and the Raymond/University historic district.

Character-defining features from the Raymond/University Historic District and the Desnoyer Park neighborhood that could potentially carry over into other developments have not been identified. The property at 650 Pelham is not located within an historic district and is therefore not subject to the historic district guidelines.

6.5. Encourage City-funded projects to protect and enhance those neighborhood physical features that define an area's visual character and urban form.

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Pelham Blvd has the potential to be an unprecedented development that enhances the aesthetics of all surrounding neighborhoods. By facilitating a development that transitions between the industrial nature of the area into a mixed-use corridor and residential border, the site can maximize it's full potential.

The project in question is not city-funded. Any future city-funded redevelopment of Pelham Boulevard will adhere to this policy.

Transportation

2.2 Support transit-oriented design through zoning and design guidelines. [end of policy statement] Compact, street-oriented design should be emphasized to promote walkability and transit use, especially in commercial corridors. Standards for building placement and design based primarily on the needs of the pedestrian should be enforced and expanded. [end of associated description]

As referenced above, the design and placement of any building at 650 Pelham should be pedestrian focused and promote transit use.

The zoning and design guidelines applicable to development at 650 Pelham do not require the building to be at the street. Design requirements in Sec. 63.110 apply.

2.6 Focus on the improvement and extension of bus service and facilities on existing transit routes, and on new routes to serve proposed LRT stations in collaboration with Metro Transit.

2.6 c. Create better north-south connections to the Central Corridor and realign or extend existing routes where appropriate.

Pelham is the main north-south connection to the CCLR for Desnoyer Park residents.

This policy refers to bus routes.

2.12 Simplify and reduce off-street parking requirements and use definitions. [end of policy] To promote investment in existing and historic commercial buildings, the use of a baseline exemption should be explored, where buildings with smaller footprints are not required to provide parking. New off-street parking should be further reduced and restricted in close proximity to transit lines and in Downtown to support transit rider-ship. [end of associated description]

Parking requirements in the city have been greatly reduced through updates to the parking section of the code and through recent amendments to the traditional neighborhood districts. Off-street parking maximums have been adopted, which effectively limits excessive surface parking lots.

F. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the Mississippi River Corridor Plan

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Objective 6.3 in the Mississippi River Corridor Plan identified the priority to provide safe pedestrian and bike connections from surrounding neighborhoods to the corridor and to support the development and access to greater regional systems, such as the Greenway.

Pelham is a direct connection to the Mississippi River Blvd and the Mississippi River Corridor between St Anthony Park and Desnoyer Park. Development along Pelham should reflect the requirements set forth to enhance and promote the River Corridor.

This site is not located within the River Corridor. Development proposed at 650 Pelham is consistent with current zoning requirements. The development does not change the plan for Pelham Boulevard relative to pedestrian and bicycle connections into the River Corridor.

G. The Site Plan does not conform to standards incorporated in the West Midway Study recommendations.

- Surface parking shall not be located within 30 feet of the corner
- Buildings shall be located to emphasize and 'anchor' the corner
- Permit 25 spaces of required parking
- Maximum set back of 15 feet from lot line
- One shade tree per five parking spaces
- Buildings shall hold the corner and shall be oriented to the corner of both public streets.

The above West Midway Task Force standards clearly identify fundamental requirements for the site that are clearly not met in the current site plan.

No standards or changes to the zoning code have been adopted as a result of the West Midway Study because the study has not yet concluded.

2. The City of St Paul Municipal Code 63 outlines standards for building.

In the City of St Paul Municipal Code 63.110, requires buildings to hold the corners, or be built up to encourage access along both side of the property when at an intersection. The site plan as approved does not hold the corner, but is set by and surrounded by parking.

The requirement to hold the corner is in Section 63.110(c), which refers to pedestrian-oriented commercial districts. The referenced section does not apply.

3. There was no Community Design Process to resolve concerns with the project.

UPDC staff recognized the issues community members and the Land Use Committee were having with the project as proposed and at a public meeting, request that there be a Community Design Process for the site to ensure the site plan to facilitate needed input from the community. With the extreme objections as evidenced in letters, public meetings, and

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communication with the developers from the communities, the site plan should not be approved based on the simple truth that the surrounding neighborhoods, using evidence from their community and city plans, do not believe that this project is the best development for the site. As a result of the approval of the site plan, all of the work that residents, city staff, consultants, and elected officials have undergone through the adoption of planning documents would be disregarded.

The site is one of unique interest for all parties. Located within a quarter-mile and 5-minute walk to the Raymond Station, and a billion dollar historic development of CCLRT, the community is using its only option, our planning documents, to guide a better development for the site. UPDC only wants to ensure that TOD and community standards are adhered to so that this will be a positive first development in this historic time.

A community design process is not a city requirement, although discussing project plans with the district council and addressing neighborhood concerns is an encouraged approach. The developer presented their plans to the Planning Commission and the District 12 Planning Council.

4. Zoning is not TN at the site

The I-1 zoning that is currently in effect is not in the best interest of the site, community, or central corridor. It may be considered spot zoning (or even "reverse spot zoning") that the site was not rezoned to TN during the Central Corridor Overlay Zoning District process and planned to be improved into a mixed-use development through the City's Comprehensive Plan. The site plan, if developed as is, would embody a minimal building that mirrors suburban style-development, instead of the urban village precedent the communities surrounding it are trying to establish.

Given that immediately north of the site has been zoned TN and that the neighborhood immediately south single-family home, and as it is on a north-south corridor of access for the Raymond Station and the CCLRT line, industrial zoning does not fit with the intent of all planning documents currently in effect for the site.

In fact, the project is yet speculative, as no tenants have been identified by the developer. UPDC considers the approval of site plan for this project to be completely inappropriate, in that it would effectively create a sub-standard precedent for development in the area, allow city-adopted planning documents to be disregarded and uninformed development to proceed, and facilitate a precedent for developer-oriented spot zoning, which is extremely disconcerting for a site that has been identified by the City of St. Paul as a major site for redevelopment in accordance to the CCLRT project.

The Central Corridor zoning changes were adopted by the Mayor and City Council. The City Council unanimously decided to leave this property zoned I1. Development

scenarios shown in the CCDS and station area plans are long-term plans that acknowledge the need for incremental improvements and changes on the way to larger scale mixed use development. Because this use is permitted in the I-1 district, and the site plan meets the district standards, approving a site plan at this location is not considered spot zoning.

Conclusions

Failure of the City of St. Paul to designate the site as a Traditional Neighborhood zone was disappointing for the surrounding neighborhoods and an inadequate epitome for the future development of the area. However, absent the TN designation, this site plan falls far short of the spirit of the plans for the area and the basic needs of the neighborhood.

In light of this, we respectfully, but strongly request that the project and attendant site plan include the following conditions in conformance with the spirit and intent of any development of the site as envisioned in the St. Anthony Park Community Plan, Merriam Park Master Plan, Raymond Station Area Plan, Mississippi River Corridor Plan, Central Corridor Development Strategy, and City of St. Paul Comprehensive Plan:

- 1) Buildings should hold the corners at Pelham and Wabash; there should not be more than 15 feet between the sidewalk and any building
- 2) Sidewalks should be installed on both Pelham and Wabash
- 3) Buildings should have façade articulation consistent with the historic district at Pelham and University
- 4) Any parking spaces should be behind the building or underground to reduce pervious pavement and encourage the use of public transportation, especially the CCLRT
- 5) There should be at least two occupied stories on any building at the site
- 6) Windows adjacent to the streets should be prominent and perpetuate a storefront
- 7) Doorways should be located close to street and emphasized architecturally
- 8) Incorporate artistic elements reflective of the Creative Enterprise artists
- 9) Increased building density
- 10) Mixed commercial and industrial use at the site

Union Park District Council
1570 Concordia Ave, Suite LL100
St Paul, MN 55104

11) Design any building at the site to facilitate and encourage the growth and expansion of our local industry and buildings. First opportunity for tenants at the site should be local businesses looking to expand. Confirm tenants for the building prior to construction.

For the reasons set forth in the staff response, there is no error sufficient to support the request for an appeal of the site plan at 650 Pelham Boulevard.

For all the reasons cited above, the Union Park District Council requests the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul to reverse the approval of Site Plan 10-906716 for the project at 650 Pelham Boulevard and mandate inclusion of the above stated conditions for the development of this site.

Respectfully submitted August 1, 2011

Glen R. McCluskey
President
Union Park District Council

CC: Russ Stark, Ward 4
John Allen, Industrial Equities
Jon Commers, St. Paul Planning Commission
Donna Drummond, Director of Planning
Amy Sparks, St. Anthony Park Community Council
Louis Jambois, St. Paul Port Authority



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

375 Jackson Street, Suite 220
St Paul, Minnesota 55101-1806

Telephone: 651-266-8989
Facsimile: 651-266-9124
Web: www.stpaul.gov/dsi

July 20, 2011

Tom Bydalek
Industrial Equities LLP
321 1st Avenue North
Minneapolis MN 55401

RE: Approval of Site Plan 10-906716
Meridian Industrial Center at 650 Pelham Blvd

Dear Mr. Bydalek:

The site plan referenced above is approved subject to the following conditions:

1. **Site improvements** The proposed building and all associated site improvements must be installed as shown on the approved site plan, subject to Public Works giving final approval for the location of any new street lights on Wabash and the material used for storm sewer pipe. Improvements covered by the site plan include all paving, grading, sidewalks, driveways, utilities, storm water management facilities, landscaping, lighting, fences and walls.
2. **Erosion and Sediment Control** All erosion and sediment control devices must be installed per the approved site plan and shall be inspected by the building inspector prior to excavation. Control devices must be maintained until final approval of the project.
3. **Permits and Fees** The permits and fees listed below are required for the work shown on the approved site plan.
 - **Building permit** A Building Permit from the Department of Safety and Inspections (651-266-9007) is required.
 - **Sewer permit** Sewer connection permits from Public Works Sewer Division (651-266-6234) are required. These permits are issued only to licensed house drain contractors. Any sewer revisions to approved plans must be approved by the City before construction.
 - **Water permit** A water service permit is required from Saint Paul Regional Water Service (1900 Rice Street).
 - **Sidewalk permit** Work on curbs, driveways and sidewalks in the public right-of-way must be done by a licensed contractor under a permit from Public Works Sidewalk Section (651-266-6120)
 - **Sign permit** Business signs require a sign permit from the Department of Safety and Inspections. Contact Yaya Diatta at 651-266-9080.
 - **Tree planting permit** A permit from the City Forester (651-632-5129) is required for planting trees in the boulevard. There is no charge for this permit.
 - **Obstruction permit** An Obstruction Permit must be obtained from Public Works (651-487-7250) if trucks/equipment will be driving over curbs or if construction will block City streets or sidewalks.
 - **MnDOT permit** You must obtain any permits required by MnDOT for work in their right of way.
 - **NPDES permit** Your contractor must obtain an NPDES permit from the MPCA for this project or update the permit that was issued in 2010 for the demolition.
 - **Watershed permit** You have obtained a permit from the Capitol Region Watershed District.
 - **Parkland Dedication Fee** A parkland dedication fee of \$12,116.67 is required for this project. The fee is payable at the time the building permit from this department is paid.

4. **Combine parcels** The site is comprised of more than one tax parcel. These must be combined into one parcel no later than two weeks after you close on the property. Lot combinations are done through Ramsey County and do not need City approval.
5. **Time limit** Work covered by this site plan must be completed no later than 12/1/12.
6. **Appeal** The decision to approve this site plan can be appealed to the Planning Commission. Appeals must be filed with my office (Department of Safety and Inspections) no later than 4:30 on 8/1/11.

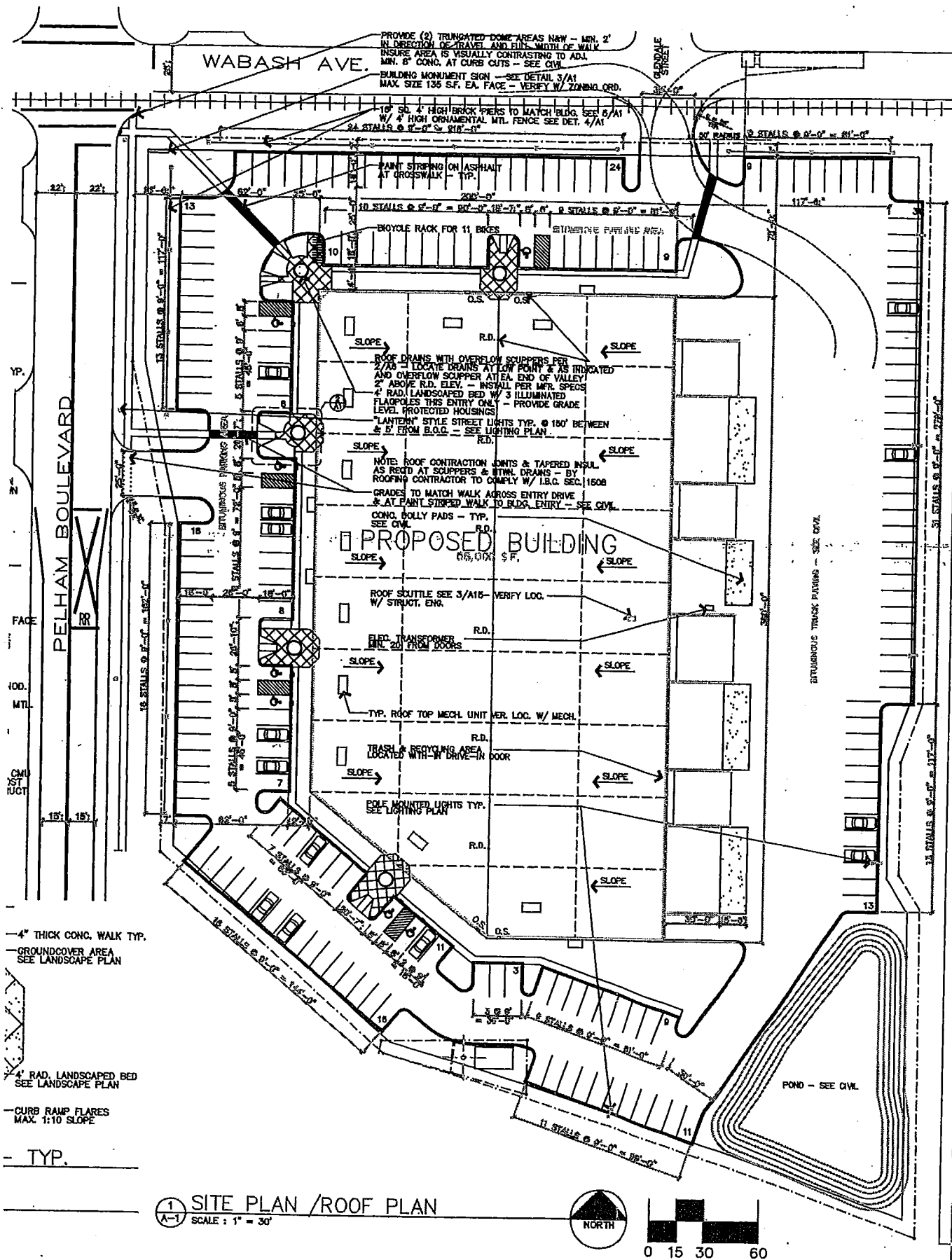
If you have any questions, you can reach me at 651-266-9086 or tom.beach@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

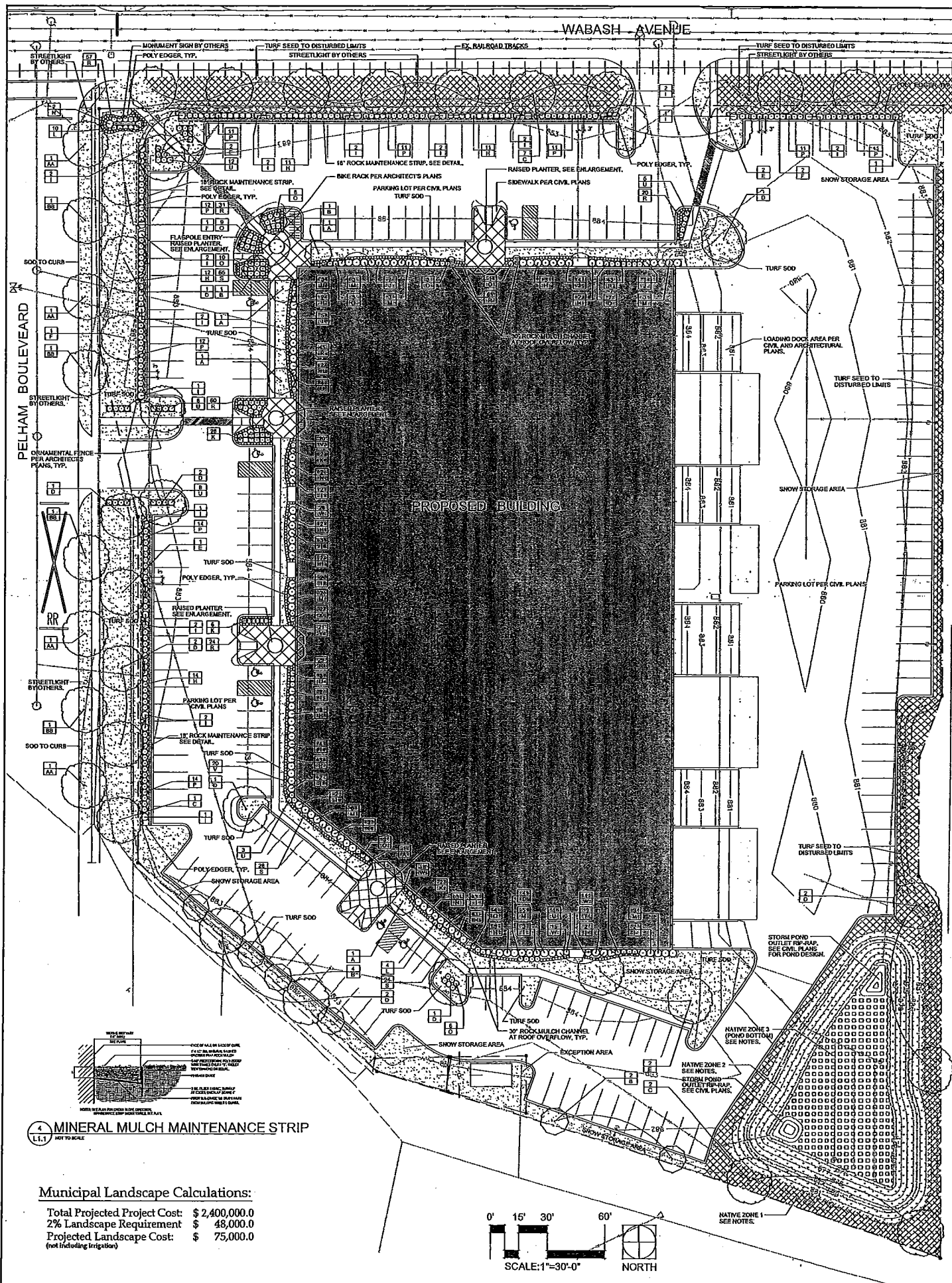
Sincerely,



Tom Beach
Zoning Specialist

cc: Sewer Division, Planning Division, Traffic Division
Councilmember Russ Stark
Samantha Henningson
Saint Anthony Park Community Council
Union Park District Council





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